

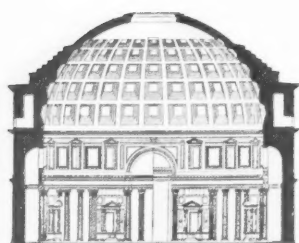
The Architectural Review

Architectural
Library

NORWICH CITY HALL

SPECIAL ISSUE

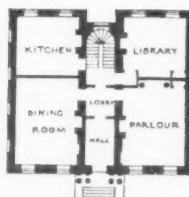
NOVEMBER, 1938 PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE
9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1



Architecture



history



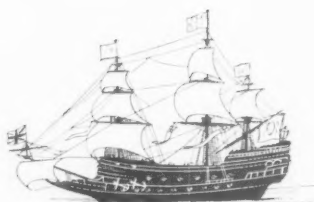
planning



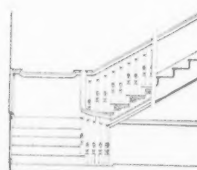
people



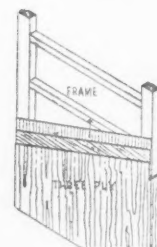
architects



communications



details



materials

are a few of the subjects discussed in

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ENGLAND

From Norman Times to the Present Day

By **FREDERICK GIBBERD, A.I.A.A.**

This book explains in a most attractive and original way, by means of text and pictures, the whole story of the evolution of English architecture; and, since they have influenced so largely the development of architecture, an account of the history and social life of the country is given as well. The text, written by a practising architect, describes every period under the general headings of *History*, *Building Activity*, *Architectural Character* and *Buildings to See*. Over 150 explanatory drawings and diagrams and about 80 half-tone pictures of period buildings illustrate the book. Printed on art paper, and cloth bound, its size is 11½ inches by 9 inches. An illustrated prospectus will be forwarded on application.

Price 5s. net

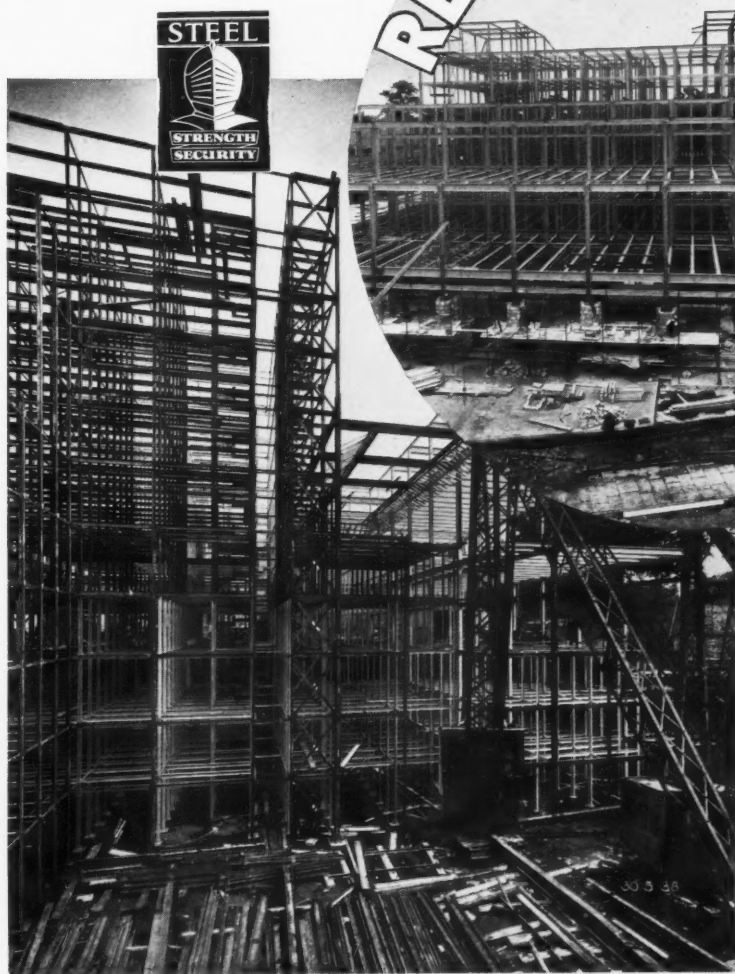
Postage 6d.

Now ready and published by

THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, 9 QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, LONDON, S.W.1

SEMITA RUBRA
XUTHUSQUE ET COMITES

*This is not a quotation from Virgil,
but only our name done into Latin
by the Public Orator at the Encænia
in a graceful reference to our share
in this important building.*



REDPATH BROWN

BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD

Architect :
Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, R.A.
Engineer :
Burnard Geen, M.Inst. C.E.
Contractors :
Benfield & Loxley, Ltd.

REDPATH BROWN & CO., LTD.
Structural Engineers

3 DUNCANNON STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

WORKS AND STOCKYARDS : LONDON, EDINBURGH, MANCHESTER, GLASGOW
OFFICES :

BIRMINGHAM, NEWCASTLE, LIVERPOOL, SOUTHAMPTON, BELFAST AND SINGAPORE

Established 1802

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

Vol. LXXXIV No. 504.

November, 1938

CONTENTS

SPECIAL ISSUE:

NORWICH CITY HALL

FOREWORD	...	201
NORWICH CITY HALL:		
The Site	...	203
The Competition Scheme	...	206
Development of the Design	...	207
The Functions of the Plan	...	208
The Exterior	...	209
The Main Entrance	...	210
The Interior, floor by floor	...	212
General Construction	...	223
Services	...	225

PLATES

Plate i The New City Hall and The Old Guildhall.	Plate vi The Entrance Doors.
Plate ii The Main Entrance.	Plate vii The Entrance Hall.
Plate iii The Main Front.	Plate viii The Council Suite.
Plate iv "Recreation," "Wisdom" and "Education."	Plate ix The Council Chamber.
Plate v The Bronze Lion.	Plate x The City Accountant's Room.
Plate xi The Tower.	

ANTHOLOGY
Page 227

MARGINALIA
Page 227

TRADE AND CRAFT
Trade News and Reviews. Page lxxii

Articles, photographs, or drawings sent with a view to publication will be carefully considered, but the Proprietors will not undertake responsibility for loss or damage. All photographs intended for reproduction should, preferably, be glossy bromide prints.

All articles and illustrations should bear the name and address of the sender, and postage should be sent to cover their return.

The Editor disclaims responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed in any article to which the author's name is attached, the responsibility for such statements or opinions resting with the author.

All communications on Editorial matters should be addressed to the Editor, THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

Prepaid Subscription Rates

United Kingdom, £1 5 0 per annum, post free. U.S.A., \$8.00 per annum, post free. Elsewhere Abroad, £1 5 0 per annum, post free. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, LTD., and crossed Westminster Bank, Caxton House Branch.

Subscribers to THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW can have their volumes bound complete with Index, in cloth cases, at a cost of 10s. each, or cases can be supplied separately at 4s. 6d. each.

An index is issued every six months, covering the months of January to June and July to December, and can be obtained, without charge, on application to the Publishers, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

THE ARCHITECTURAL PRESS, 9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1

Telephone :

9212-7 Whitehall (6 lines)

Telegrams :

"Buildable Parl, London."





N O R W I C H

THE NEW CITY HALL AND THE OLD GUILDHALL

The mediæval Guildhall, which in 1407 replaced the Tolbooth where royal taxes had been collected, was the first home of municipal administration in the town. Till now it has housed the Council Chamber, the Court in which Assizes are opened, the Lord Mayor's Parlour and other offices, a Police Station and the City regalia. It flanks the market on the north and is being retained as a monument. The new City Hall, designed by C. H. James and S. Rowland Pierce, occupies the west side of the market and is shown beyond the Guildhall in this illustration. The simple brick surface of the former contrasts with the chequered flint of the latter, but each is a product of the craftsmanship of its day. At the foot of the Guildhall can be seen Sir Edwin Lutyens' War Memorial which is now being moved to the centre of the wall bounding the Market Place on the west, below the main entrance to the City Hall.

PLATE I

November 1938



The ceremonial baton designed by the architects for presentation to H.M. the King at the opening of Norwich City Hall. It is of silver and lignum vitæ. The reproduction is exactly half full size. The wording of the inscription (indicated by letters of the alphabet on the drawing) is: "Presented to His Majesty King George VI. at the opening of the new City Hall, Norwich, by the architects, C. H. James, A.R.A., F.R.I.B.A., and S. Rowland Pierce, F.R.I.B.A., 29th October, 1938."

FOREWORD

EVERY now and then the completion of a new building arouses exceptional interest in the architectural world. This interest is of the kind that Fleet Street labels "news value." It has very little to do with size, situation or even with architectural merit, but is, one supposes, the result of a propitious combination of circumstances—of a configuration of the planets, as it were—whereby the cumulative effect of a number of independent factors is to produce a building whose stature is beyond the scope of any of them.

When this happens, perhaps once in a couple of years, architecture becomes news, and an architectural event (such as the ceremonial opening of the building) becomes a public event. Architects for once receive acknowledgement of the public significance that they themselves know attaches to their profession.

Among recent buildings that have enjoyed this concentration of limelight one can recall Liberty's in Great Marlborough Street, off Regent Street, the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon, Cambridge University Library, the R.I.B.A. building in Portland Place and the De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill; and one can foresee that the same public and professional interest awaits the completion of the new London University and the new St. George's Hospital.

To the above list must now be added Norwich City Hall, which was opened by His Majesty the King on October 29th. That is the justification for devoting a whole issue of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW to this building. The factors that operate in this case to give the building its outstanding news value can be summed up as follows.

First, the post-war era has been a prodigious era of town-hall building, the town hall being the direct architectural expression of an age which is increasingly organized as a bureaucracy; and Norwich is the most ambitious of all of these, reaping the benefit of the public interest that has been progressively fostered in Worthing, Southampton, Swansea, Leeds, Hornsey and Slough. Moreover the town hall has long been the backbone of the competition system, so that the most ambitious of recent town halls, the outcome of one of the most discussed of recent competitions, may be

said to represent architecture as serving official needs after a fashion determined by architecture's own official method.

Secondly, since a City Hall is an expression of civic pride, it inevitably invites a wide public interest. The citizen feels that he has a right to praise or abuse something that is essentially his, and he pays attention accordingly. See the diverse comments from the local press and elsewhere quoted below.

Finally, this particular building belongs to what may be described as the class of "long-term buildings": buildings that have been designed and studied over a period of years and have therefore been enabled to indulge themselves in the elaborate organization of craftsmanship. They are the antithesis of the class of buildings that exploit the modern and more impersonal idiom of a mechanistic age. The most famous example of the class to which Norwich belongs is Stockholm Town Hall, perhaps the last of the really great buildings of the handicraft period. Its qualities, like those of Norwich, are personal ones and it is these personal qualities that again invite a peculiar degree of public interest in a building that possesses them. For personal reactions are the proper topic of public discussion of the arts.

"Less than nine months ago a friend, with considerable qualifications for passing an opinion on things architectural, assured me that the City Hall when finished would be to him, at any rate, a perpetual eyesore. The other day I found him rapily gazing at the structure from the Walk.

"And are you still of the same opinion?" I interposed.

"He hauled down his flag at once.

"I made the biggest error of judgment I ever made," he replied. "Every day I find something fresh to admire about it. I marvel at the vision of its architects who could foresee the final effect of so difficult a scheme. A more ornate structure would probably create a greater impression for the moment, but I am now convinced it would not be so pleasant to live with."

FROM THE EASTERN EVENING NEWS.

"Anyone who has an eye in their head which does not squint can see that everything which is wrong is to be found in the curious erection which now dominates the Old Market Place. It is Norwich's memorial to extravagance and mediocrity."

LETTER FROM LADY BOILEAU TO THE NORWICH SOCIETY.

"Some of the impressions Mr. Powley gave me of his reactions to the City Hall struck me as singularly interesting.

"First I tried to form my opinion of the building without the tower, and then the tower without the building," he said. "On a previous visit to the city, when I saw the building in course of erection, I greatly feared that the red brick would have a glaring effect. To my astonishment I found it already toned down to a really pleasing state. As for the tower, I originally took a violent dislike to its inclusion in the scheme, but viewing it now, and especially from various parts of Norwich, I find I was wrong. It is a thing of beauty. For some time I was at a loss to recall any structure which it could be said to resemble. The nearest parallel I can think of is the campanile at St. Mark's, Venice."

FROM THE EASTERN EVENING NEWS.

"The new City Hall is one of the finest I have ever seen. It is very much like the L.C.C. Hall at Westminster and might have been designed by the same architect.

"The beautifully worked bronze doors will attract everyone with an artistic leaning combined with commercial acumen. When you see the colossal and costly buildings erected for cinema purposes today, surely anyone with any sense of proportion must welcome the City Hall.

"I have seen cities of Canada, America, Europe, and Africa, but I have never found a spot so glorious as the capital of East Anglia."

MR. FRED EASTON QUOTED IN THE EASTERN EVENING NEWS.

The photographs of Norwich City Hall reproduced in this issue were specially taken for THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW by M. O. Dell and H. L. Wainwright, its official photographers.

An early nineteenth-century print of Norwich shows it as a city crowned by numerous towers and spires. Of these the principal ones are the spire of the cathedral and the square keep of the castle, and the subsidiary ones are the towers of the many churches for which Norwich is famous. A new landmark has now been added in the two hundred foot tower of the City Hall.



NORWICH CITY HALL

NORWICH, city and county borough, closely associated with the names of Suckling, Fastolf, Hansard, Borrow, Cotman and Woodforde, is the hub from which radiate the spokes of roads running inland and towards the twenty miles distant rim of the Norfolk border. It is the largest town east of the Grimsby—Leicester—London line, with a population of 126,000, half as much again as that of any place within 100 miles.

For a city occupying this position the need of an efficiently running and well-oiled administrative headquarters is manifest, and this need was felt as long ago as 1898 when the provision of new municipal offices was mooted, it then being affirmed "that the inadequate and unsuitable accommodation for the transaction of the public work of the city is a hindrance to the proper despatch of the business, detrimental to the health of the officials and members of the Corporation, and disproportionate to and unworthy of the position and dignity of this important City."

The matter was referred to a committee and then lapsed, bubbling up again in 1912, when a loan sanction was given by the Local Government Board for extending the old Municipal Buildings on the adjoining site of the former Fishmarket. This was subsequently cancelled owing to the war which began in 1914.

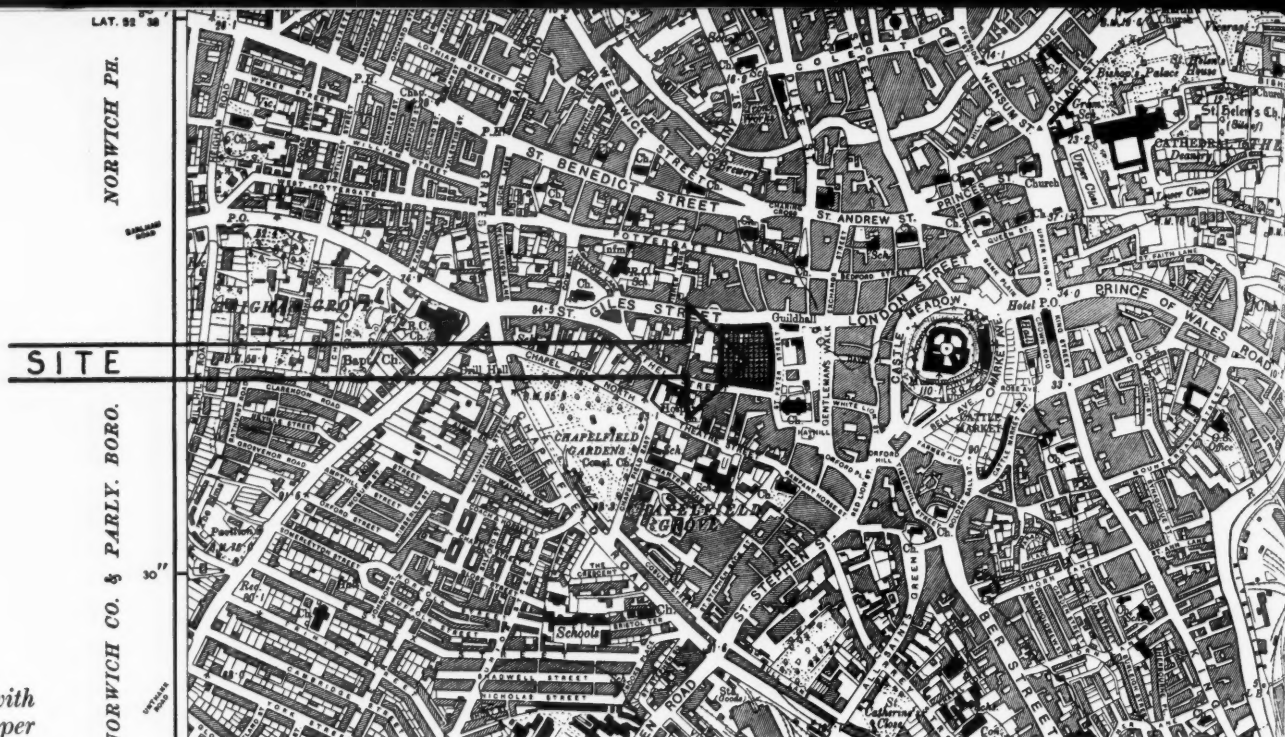
From time to time after this accommodation was acquired in varying parts of the city to relieve congestion at the offices in the Market Place, and departments were scattered over a large number of buildings. The City Police at one time occupied as many as four of these, of which one was a temporary structure only. The municipal administration was carried on under conditions, one might say, that no commercial firm of any standing

would tolerate for a moment; and eventually the demand for new accommodation terminated in the competition for a new City Hall which was held in 1932. For this 143 competitors entered, the assessor being Robert Atkinson, F.R.I.B.A., and in making his award to Messrs. C. H. James and S. Rowland Pierce he said that "the winning scheme is a simple dignified straightforward design, is not too overpowering for its position and has sufficient elasticity to be able, during progress of the work, to be modified to suit any requirements of the Council." Among details upon which he commented were the fact that it was one of the few designs which placed the Medical Officer's Department in a separate block at the rear of the site, the excellent planning of the Council suite and the good placing and lighting of the City Accountant's Department.

A typical elevation and plan from the competition drawings are reproduced on page 206. In connexion with lighting, the placing of the Rates Hall at the bottom of the south light-well should be noted. Excellent top lighting was thus secured, the surrounding offices obtaining direct side-lighting at the external walls. The placing of the Medical Officer separately at the rear, referred to in the report, greatly facilitated the planning of the front block.

After the competition came the slump, and the scheme was held over. During this time, however, the sizes of departments altered, so that when orders were eventually given to proceed the architects did find that a considerable portion had to be modified to meet the new requirements. A comparison of the typical floor plan and elevation of the competition scheme with the final plans and elevations will show the changes.

Norwich, a city with a population fifty per cent. greater than that of any other town within a hundred miles, occupies an important position on the east coast of Great Britain and is the meeting point of many main roads from inland and the coast. In consequence of this the town's traffic problem is somewhat complicated, but conditions in the centre of the town have been improved by the clearances made in connexion with the erection of the new City Hall. The aerial view shows the congestion which the new buildings have replaced, and also the site of the new market which is approximately twice the size of the old. As will be seen from the adjacent plan, the site of the new building faces the Castle mound across the intervening buildings. The new civic centre preserves the old centre of the town as the focus of city life.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey by courtesy of H.M. Stationery Office.



It is interesting to note that the scheme incorporates the Market Place—somewhat arbitrarily established in the first instance by William the Conqueror despite the fact that other markets then existed in the town. It has not now been relegated to the outskirts to make room for a grand Civic Square,

providing an ambulatory for casuals, but has been replanned by Robert Atkinson. The size has been increased by the demolition of the old Municipal Buildings, the stalls are being refitted and provided with new gaily coloured awnings, and when completed the square will be worthy of the market which

brings visitors to the city from 40 miles away on Saturdays "in a great hurry" as Parson Woodforde says.

It would not perhaps be out of place here to compare this with what has happened elsewhere under the same circumstances. Nottingham was reputed to have the largest open-air

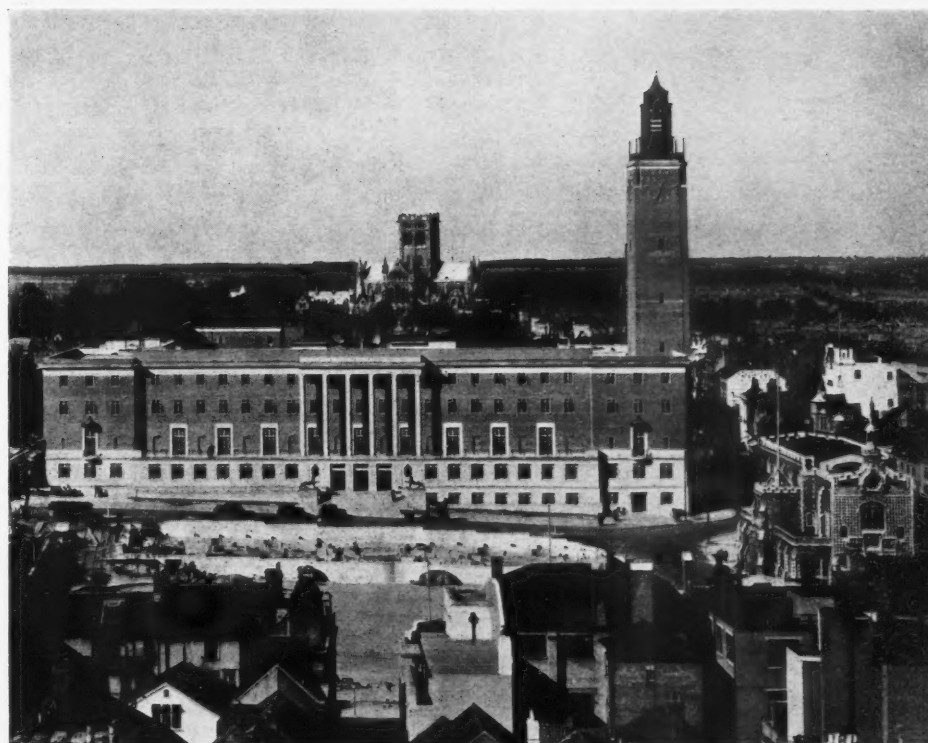
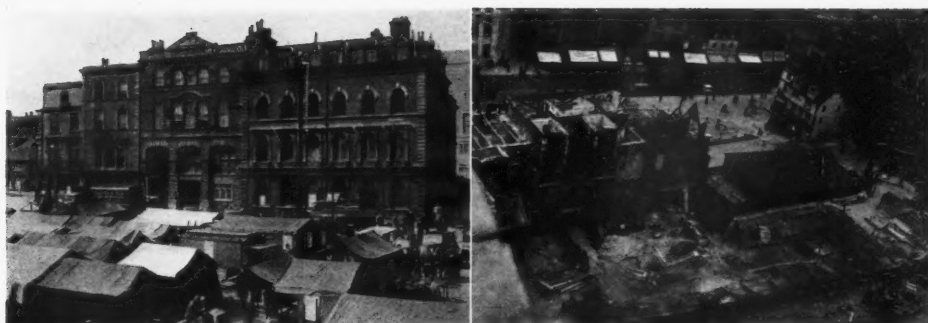
market in Great Britain after Covent Garden. The Market Place was, as at Norwich, the centre of the city. Here Goose Fair was held each year when the whole town gave itself over to boisterous revelry after the grand opening ceremony had been performed by the Mayor before the Exchange Buildings. But, as at Norwich, the need was felt for new municipal buildings and the Georgian Exchange was demolished to make way for the new Council House. With the Exchange went the market and, ergo, some of Nottingham's glory. It is true the new market is now housed under a glass roof elsewhere and the market people are becoming more reconciled to their better conditions, but the city centre without its Market Place is a crown without its Koh-i-noor.

Norwich, however, has improved her Market Place and made it a fitting centre to a town whose commerce is chiefly connected with corn and cattle, even if the particular markets dealing with these are elsewhere.

The old Guildhall (see frontispiece), the home of municipal administration in the town, bounds the market on the North and St. Peter Mancroft (Magna Crofta) on the South, two monuments to medieval craftsmanship whose flinty-grey exteriors act as a foil to the warm tones of the brick facings and Ketton stone of the new City Hall, craftsmanship of today.

The new municipal building stands high above the town, its tower dominating Norwich and yielding only to the Cathedral spire. From the observation platform at the top of the tower one can see the beach at Yarmouth on a fine day, but it should be noted that although a certain section of Norwich folk saw the tower rising as symbolic of their rates, this portion of the building does perform a definite function. In addition to forming several archive storage rooms the tower contains the cold water supply tanks, and the extra head of water thus secured has enabled a higher temperature to be obtained in the boiler chamber. Aesthetically the tower forms the focal point of the temporal centre of the city as the Cathedral does that of the spiritual, while facing the City Hall the Norman castle on its high mound provides the historical centre.

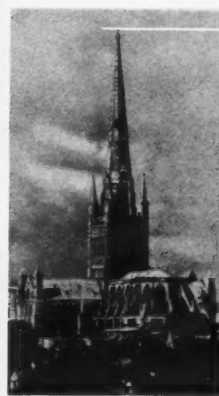
The completed portions of the City Hall comprise the Municipal Administration block and the Police Station block. The Medical Officer of Health's department is under consideration, although Air Raid Precautions has now raised its ugly head and must be included. The north-west wing of the building is scheduled for the future so that on completion the Civic Centre will surround a central court on all four sides, a new axle for the hub.



The new civic scheme includes improvement of the central Market Place. The old municipal buildings have been demolished and the space incorporated in Robert Atkinson's design for the new square. The illustrations show the front of the old municipal buildings before demolition with the market stalls before them, top left; the rear of the old municipal buildings during demolition from the roof of the newly erected City Hall, top right; and below, the City Hall from the Castle, with the old municipal buildings demolished and the new Market Square nearing completion.



STOCKHOLM
TOWN HALL



NORWICH
CATHEDRAL



NORWICH
CITY HALL

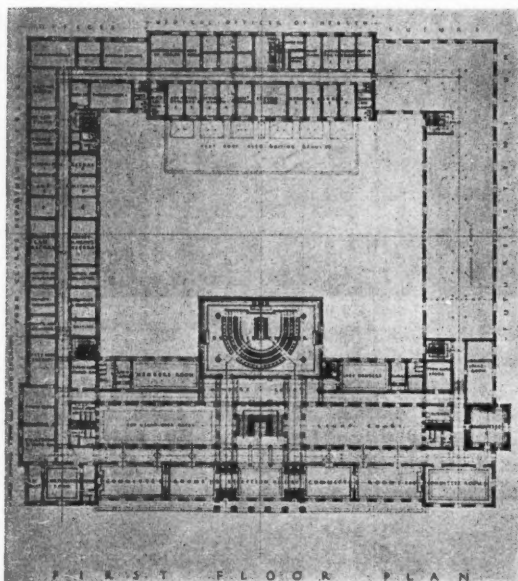
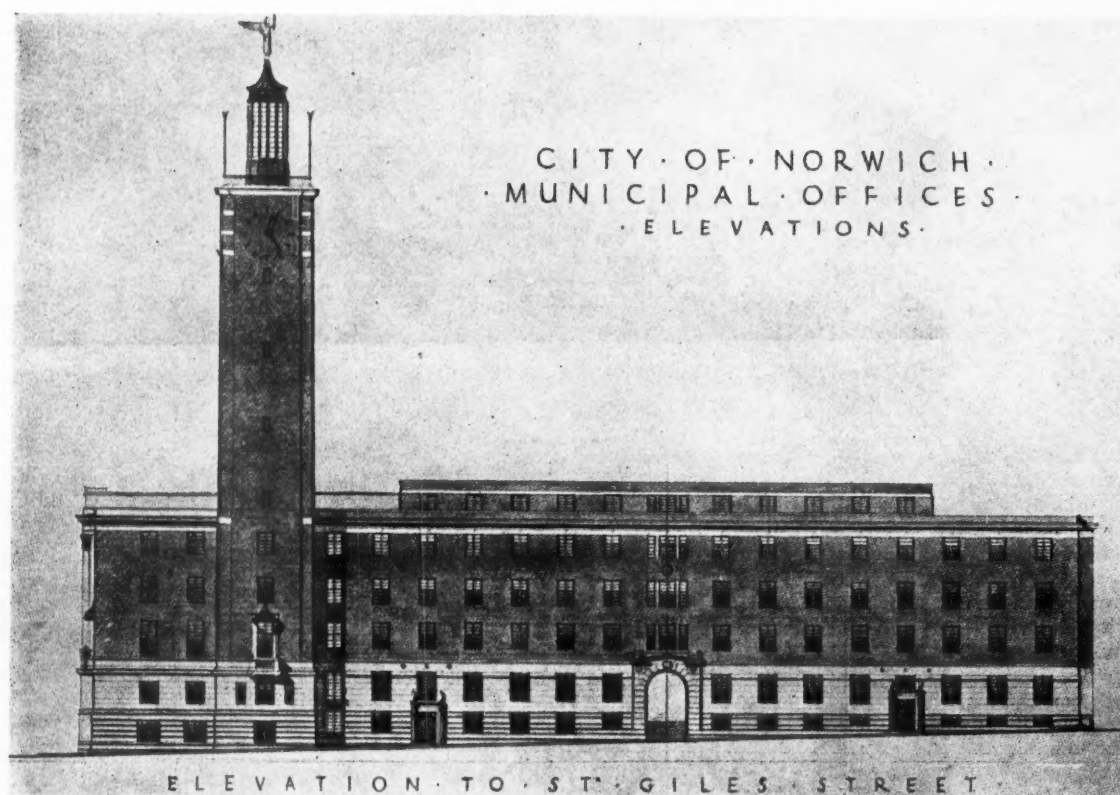
353 FEET

315 FEET

202 FEET

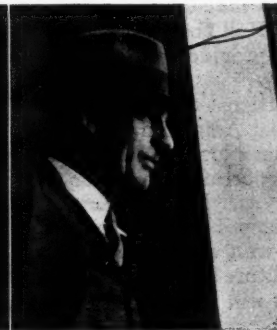
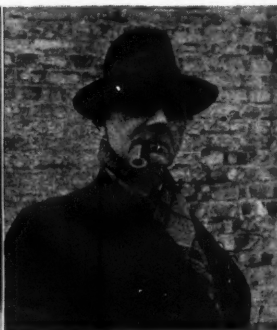
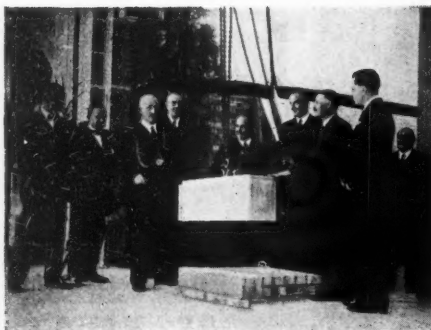
A COMPARISON
OF HEIGHT

NORWICH CITY HALL: DEVELOPMENT OF T

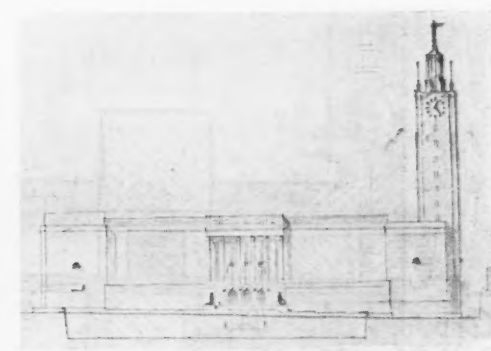
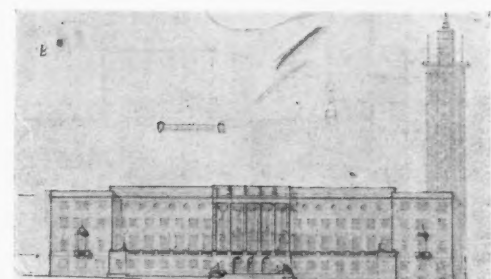
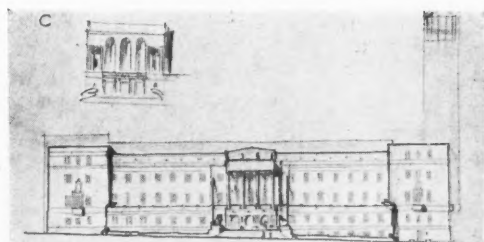
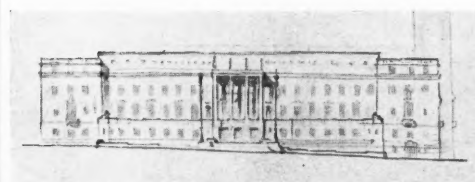
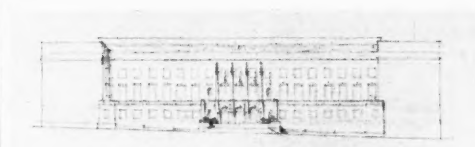
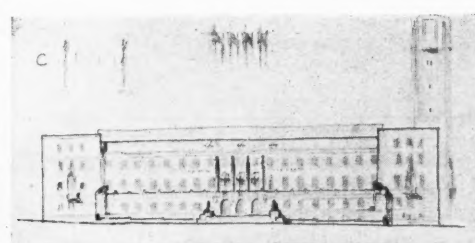
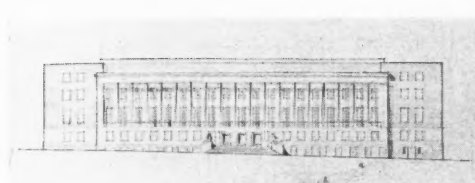
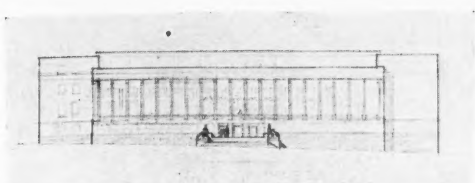


THE COMPETITION SCHEME

Norwich City's long-felt need for new municipal buildings culminated in the competition of 1932. The winning scheme was chosen by the assessor, Robert Atkinson, out of 143 entries, mainly for its open planning in the main block, due to the placing of the M.O.H. Department at the rear in a separate building, the excellent lighting to the Rates Hall and the Accountant's Department, and the possibility of future adaptation as might be found necessary. The competition elevation and the first floor plan are illustrated. It is interesting to compare this plan with the same plan as actually built (see page 216). The building is actually being carried out in stages, so the elevation to St. Giles Street remains unfinished at present.



F THE DESIGN



THE MAIN ELEVATION

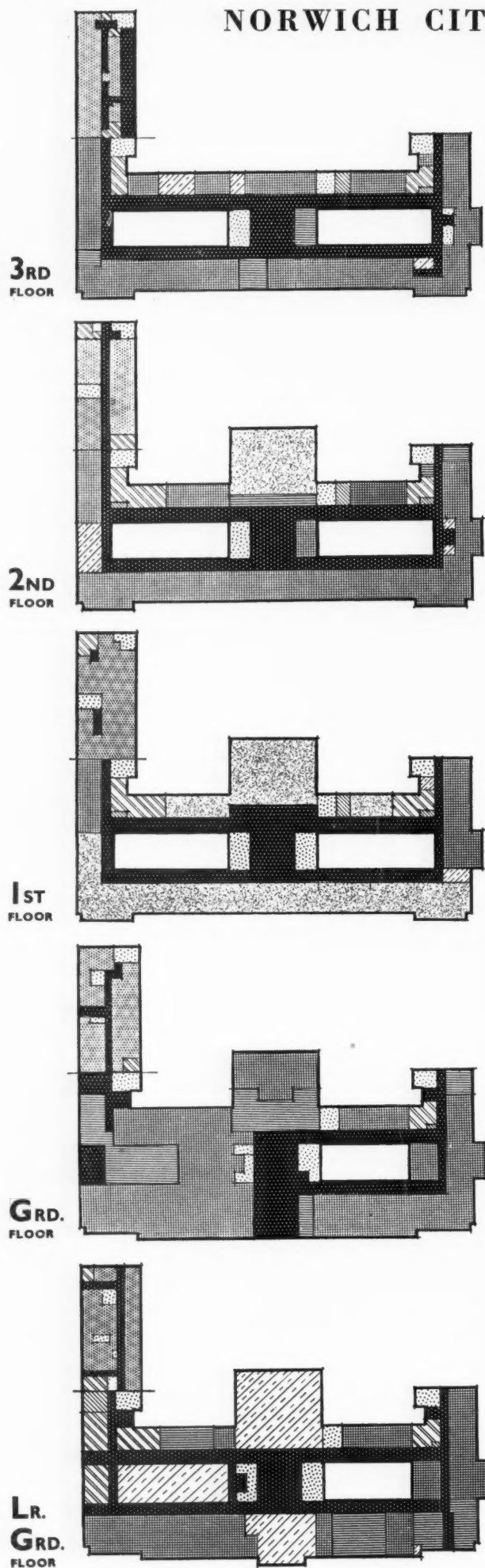
The final design for Norwich City Hall (a perspective from the competition drawings by J. D. M. Harvey is shown above) may be compared with the illustration of the building as completed on page 209 and the photographs of the previous condition of the site on the preceding pages. St. Peter Mancroft is seen on the left and the Guildhall on the right of the enlarged Market Place, the whole forming a civic group well expressing the character of the place. The nine sketches on this page are the architects' own studies for the main elevation and show the evolution of the architectural conception previous to completion of the competition drawings.



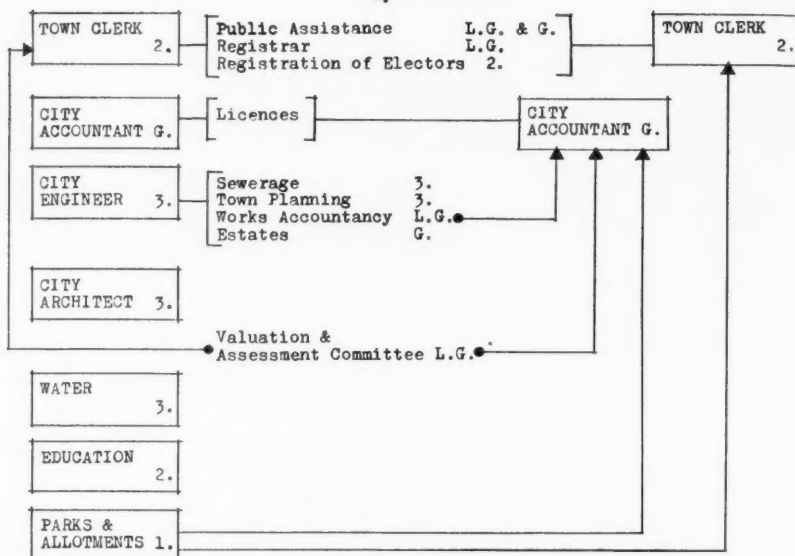
PERSONNEL

Left to right, the small private ceremony at the laying of the foundation stone; the Clerk of Works, Mr. R. C. Long; the Consulting Engineer, Mr. R. Travers Morgan; the General Foreman, Mr. H. A. Glenister; the principal sculptor, Mr. Alfred Hardiman and the architects, Messrs. C. H. James and S. Rowland Pierce, on the site, laying the last stones at the top of the tower.

NORWICH CITY HALL: FUNCTIONS OF THE PLAN



Council Suite: Members: Lord Mayor: 1.



The diagram above shows the inter-relationship of departments, which is much the same in all Municipal Buildings of comparable importance. In the planning of Norwich City Hall these departments are distributed on the various floors as shown in the five diagrammatic plans on the left. The horizontal and vertical circulation spaces are the main arteries, and it should be noted how these have been planned to feed the various departments. The drawings should be read in connexion with the key alongside.

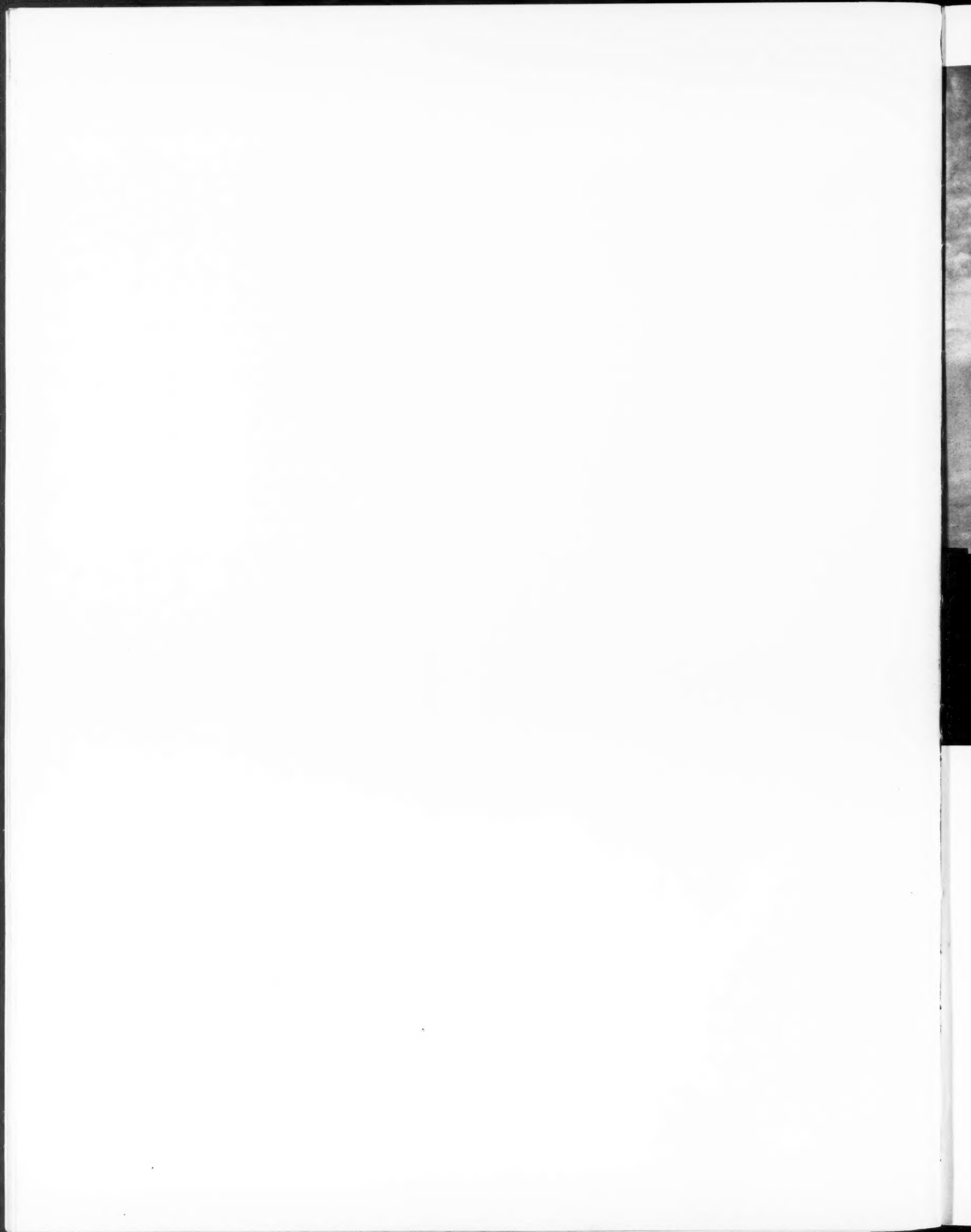
- COUNCIL CHAMBER, MAYORS, MEMBERS, & COMMITTEE ROOMS.
- ADMINISTRATION OFFICES.
- PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS
- CLOAK ROOMS & LAVATORIES.
- HORIZONTAL CIRCULATION.
- VERTICAL CIRCULATION
- STORES & STRONG ROOMS
- SERVICE
- POLICE



The City Hall faces the Market Place, and the main entrance with its approaching flight of steps leads directly to the ground floor and centre of circulation. The natural slope of the site allows the lower ground floor to be entered also from the street, this entrance being on the extreme right of the illustration.

PLATE II

November 1938

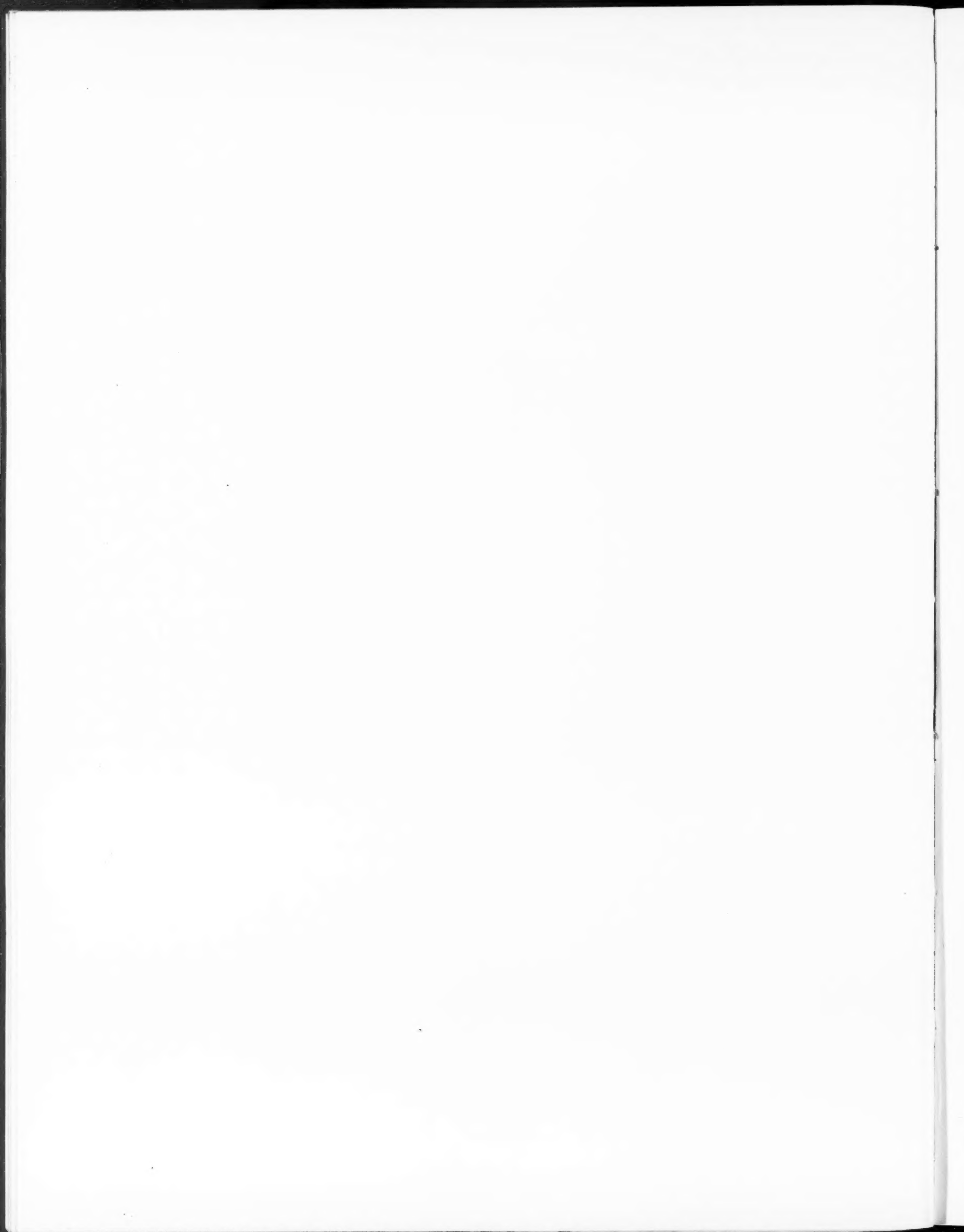




The principal front from the corner by the Guildhall. The six columns rising above the main entrance are illuminated at night by floodlights concealed in the soffit of the portico. Ketton stone has been used for the stone dressings, the facing bricks being eleven inches wide and purpose-made. This illustration shows also the curved supports to the balcony railings.

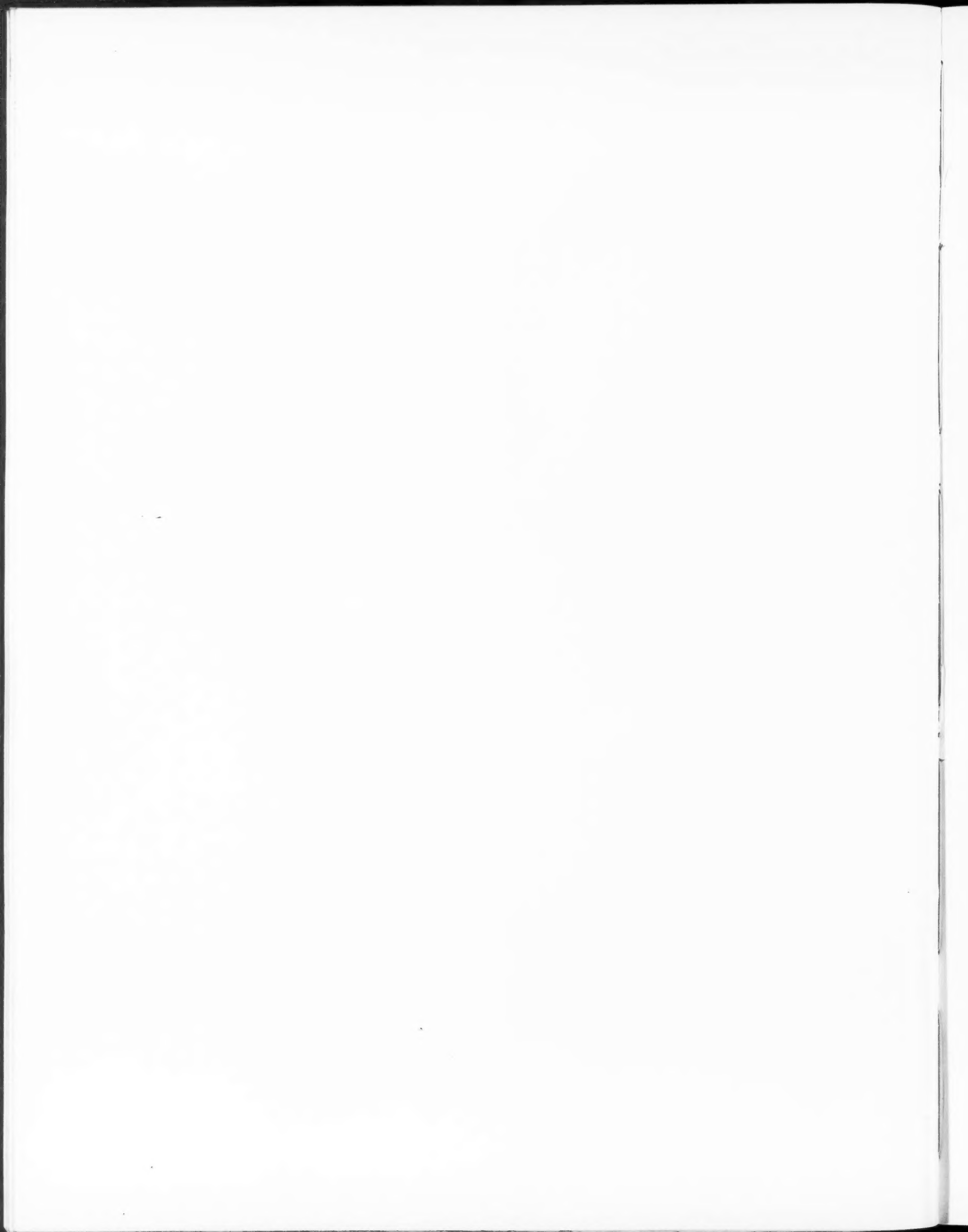
PLATE III

November 1938



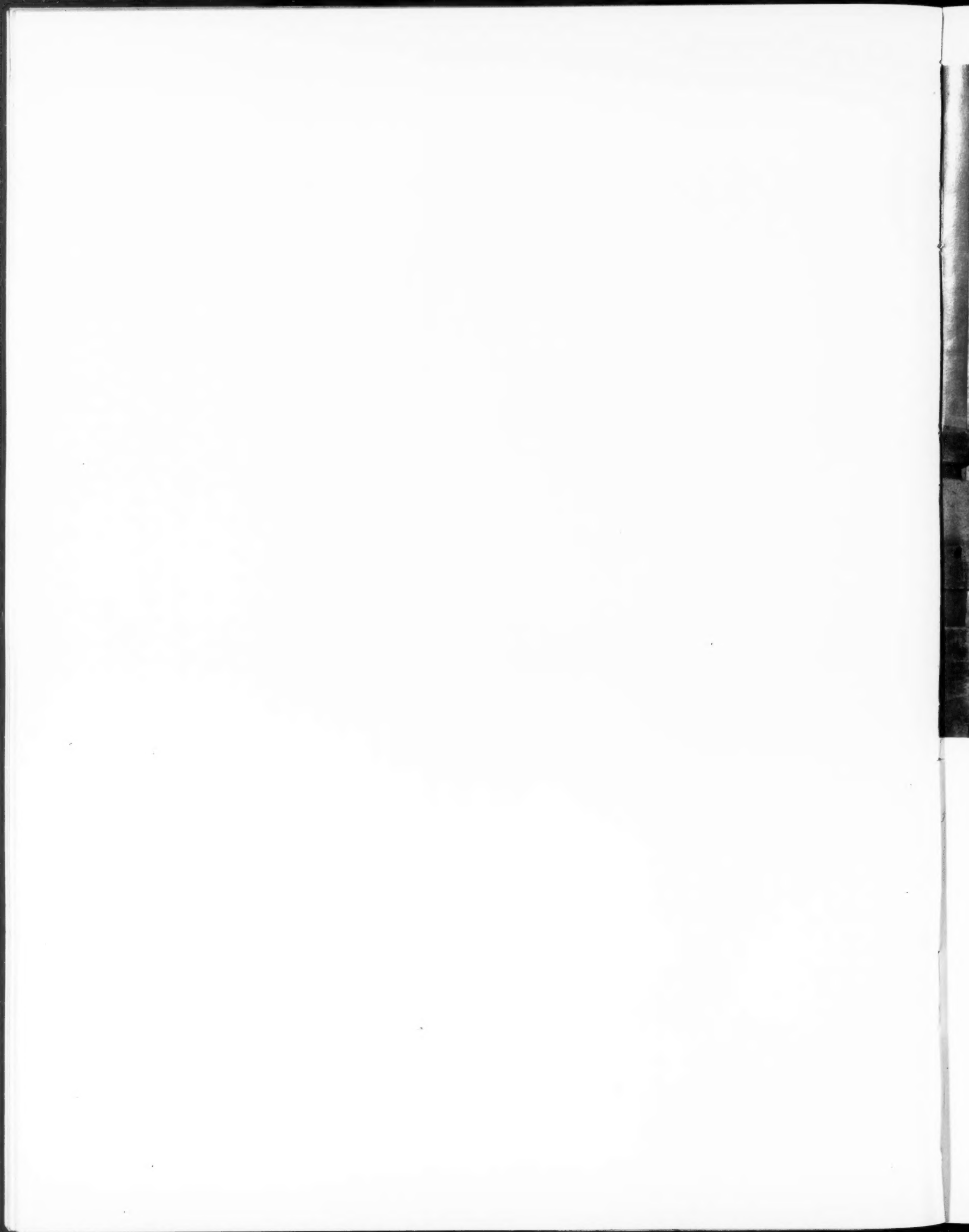


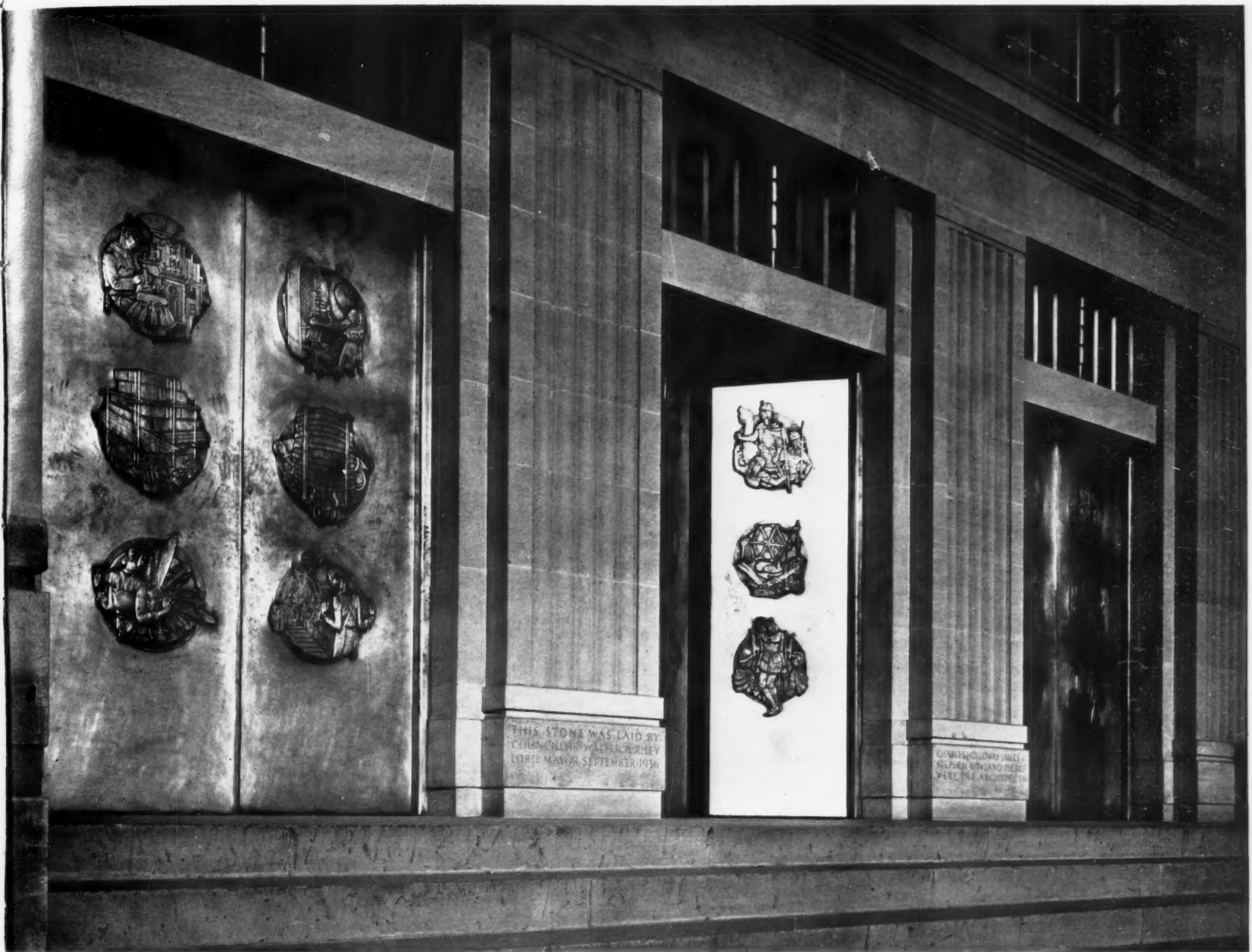
"Recreation," "Wisdom" and "Education," three figures by Alfred Hardiman, decorate the centre of the elevation overlooking the court on the west. The illustration shows the texture of the brickwork, and three formalized air vents in the stone band beneath the figures.





The entrance in the centre of the main front is flanked by two bronze lions, sculptured by Alfred Hardiman. The lion forms part of the Norwich coat of arms. One of these bronzes was shown at the Glasgow Exhibition, where it decorated the main axis of Dominion Avenue.

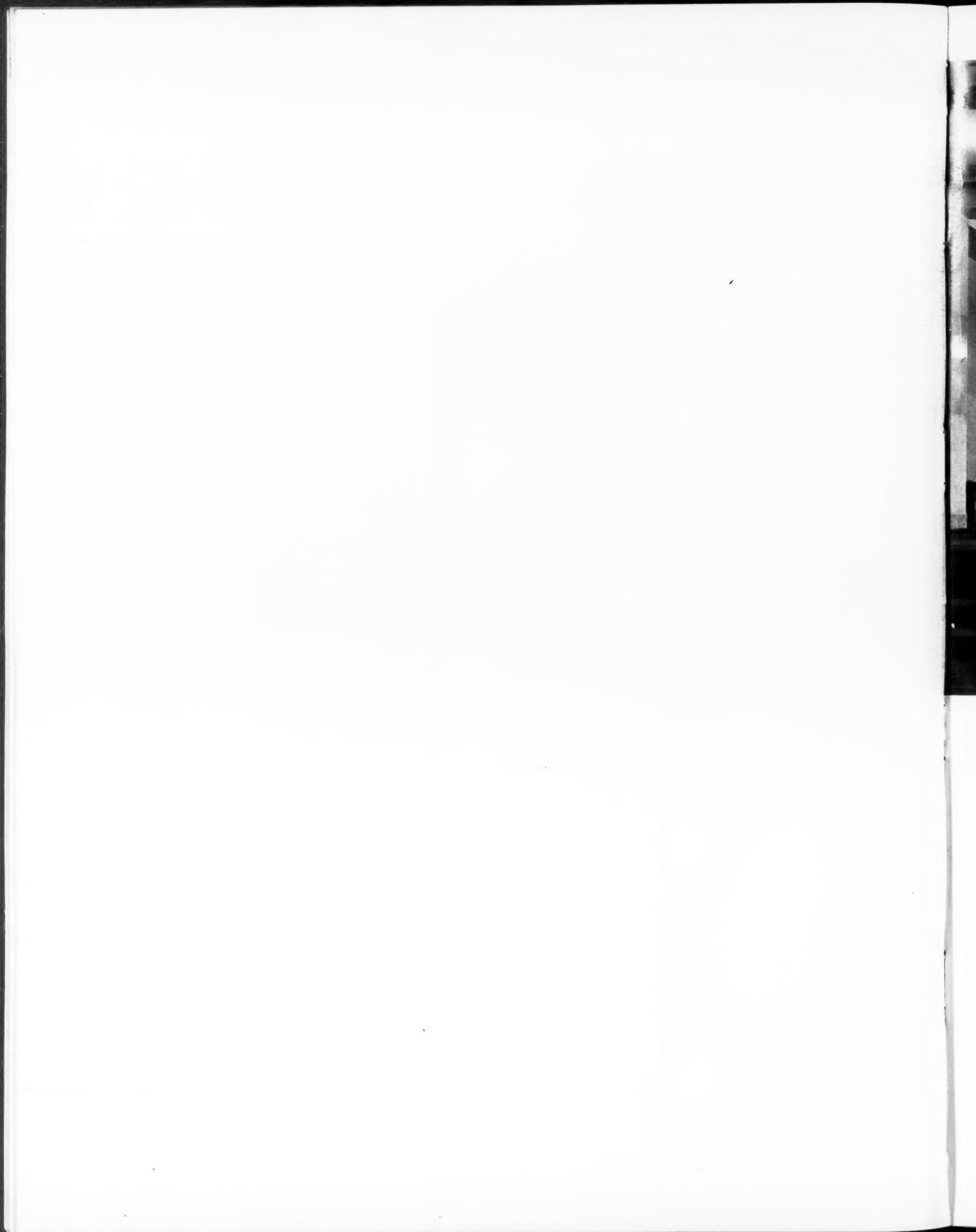




The three pairs of bronze doors to the main entrance. The eighteen plaques in relief illustrate the trades of the district and certain historical incidents connected with the town. The sculptor was James Woodford. When open these doors fold back against the piers and become panels, their edges being concealed by hinged bronze fillets. A detail of the way this is contrived appears on page 210.

PLATE vi

November 1938

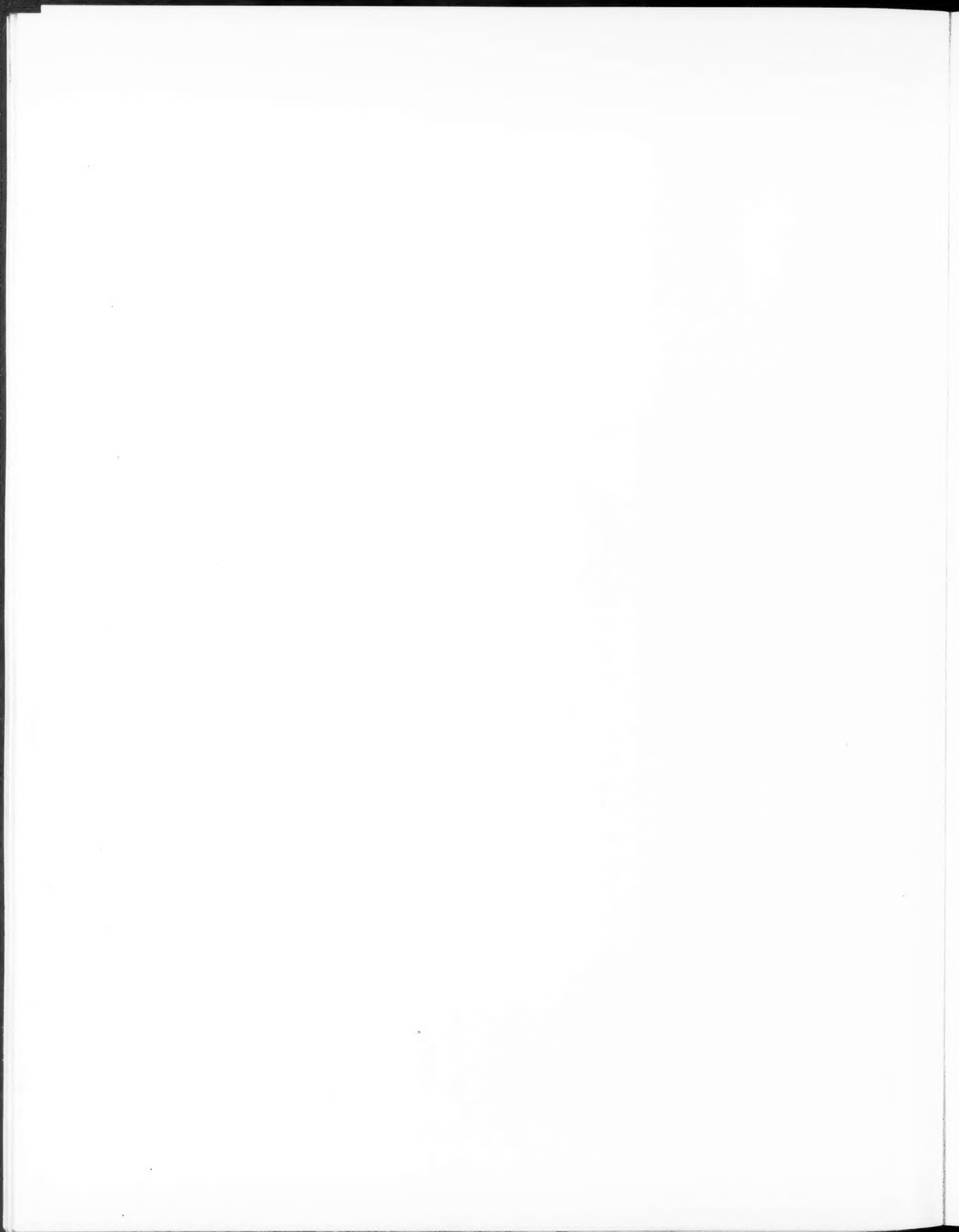




The materials used for facing and flooring the entrance hall include Mabresina, Clipsham, Seagliola, Stancliffe, Blue Pennant and York stones, the casing to the columns being of Ashburton stone. The wall facing the main doors is inscribed with a list of the Mayors of Norwich since 1403. Light fittings and furnishings throughout the building have been designed by the architects. In the centre can be seen a waiting bench of which a drawing appears on page 213.

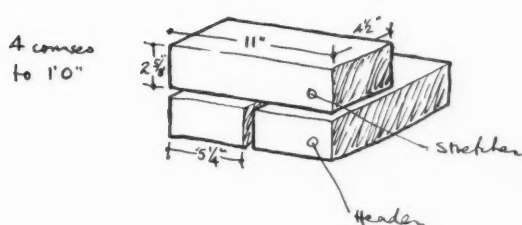
PLATE vii

November 1938

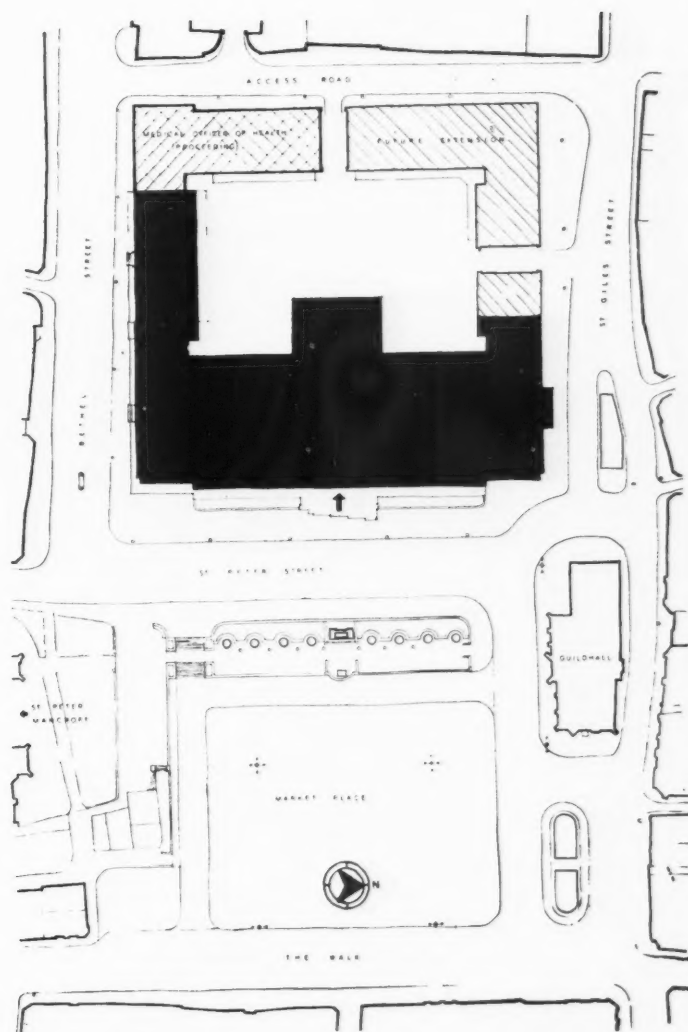
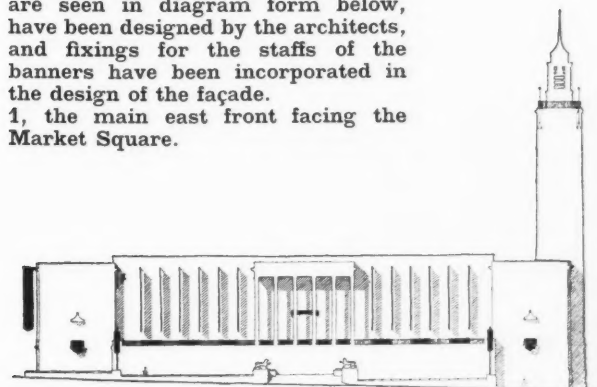


On page 208 is given in diagrammatic form the allocation of the different floors of the building to the many departments for which a City Hall has to provide accommodation. The detailed description of the building that follows is again arranged floor by floor, the illustrations being grouped in each case with the appropriate plan. The sections devoted to each floor are, however, preceded by sections dealing separately with the exterior and the main entrance.

The Exterior



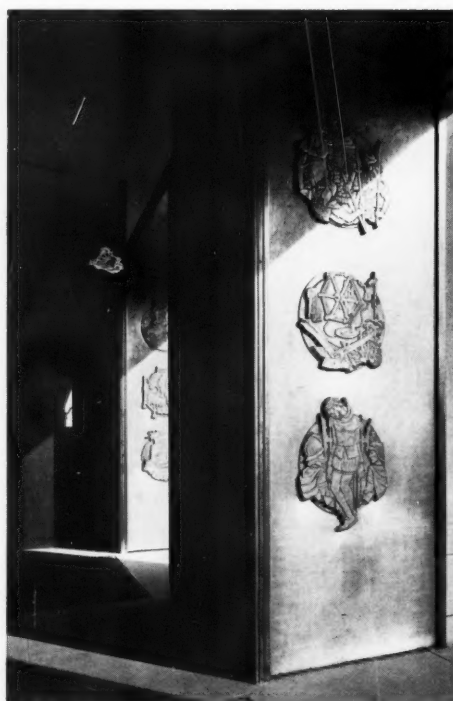
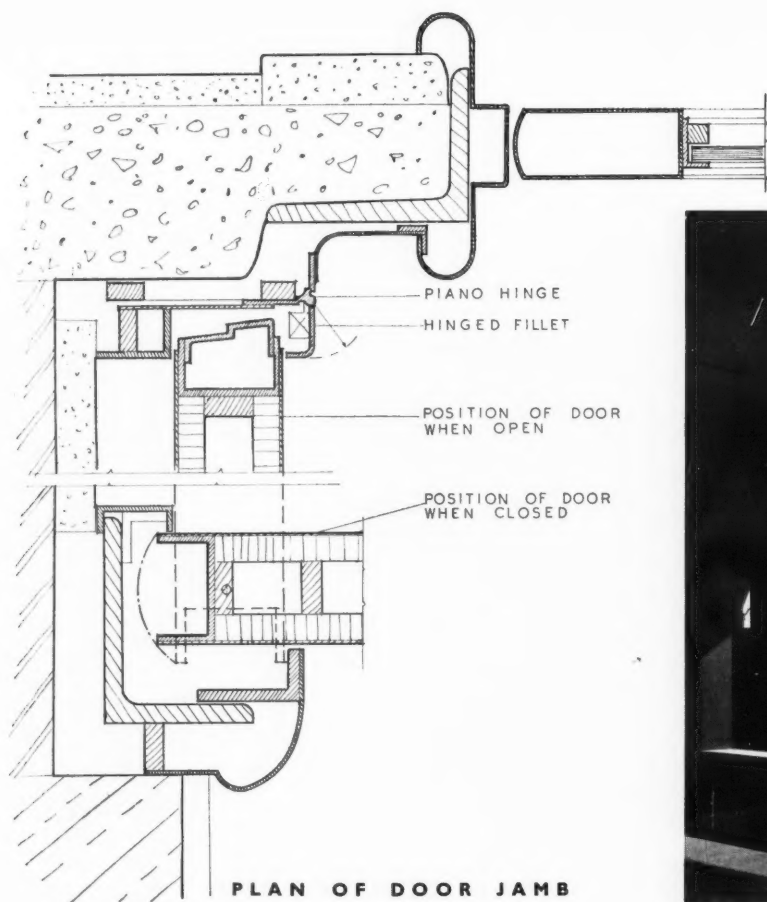
The new civic scheme can be seen in its entirety in the block plan on the right. The portion of the City Hall now completed is shown black. The south-west wing of the building is now under consideration and the north-east, which will complete the inner court, is for future municipal developments. The plan also shows the new position of the war memorial photographed in its old position on Plate i. The clearing away of the old buildings for the improvement of the Market Square shows the Guildhall and St. Peter Mancroft to much better advantage, and their greyness forms a contrast to the warm Ketton stone and purpose-made facing bricks of the City Hall. As shown above these bricks rise the normal four courses to one foot but the stretchers are 11 inches wide and the headers 5 1/4 inches wide, it being considered necessary to increase the dimensions of these building units on account of the size of the City Hall in relation to the sizes of surrounding buildings. See also Plates ii, iii, and iv. It is interesting to note that provision has been made in the building for decoration on ceremonial occasions. These banners and draperies, which are seen in diagram form below, have been designed by the architects, and fixings for the staffs of the banners have been incorporated in the design of the façade.





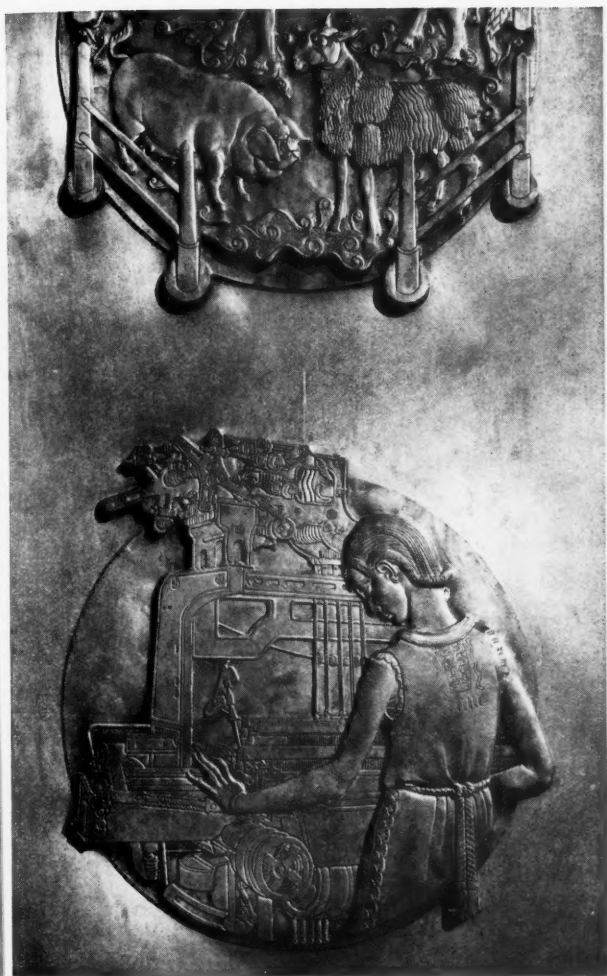
2

The Main Entrance



4

The main entrance 2, reached by a flight of steps from St. Peter Street above the Market Square, has three pairs of bronze doors, with eighteen plaques by James Woodford. The twelve plaques on the two outer doors illustrate the trades connected with the city: chocolate; mustard; agriculture (two plaques); boots and shoes; silk looms; wine bottling; soda-water syphon filling; brewing; aeroplanes; and wire netting, together with one plaque illustrating the building of the new City Hall. 3, shows two of these in detail. The six plaques on the centre doors illustrate the city's history. The doors have been designed to fold back against the piers to become panels, 4, the edges being concealed by hinged bronze fillets as shown in the drawing on the left. See also Plate vi.

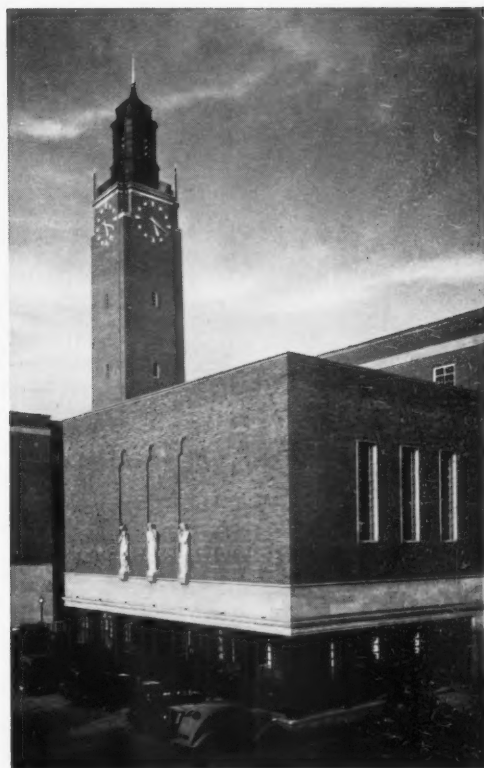
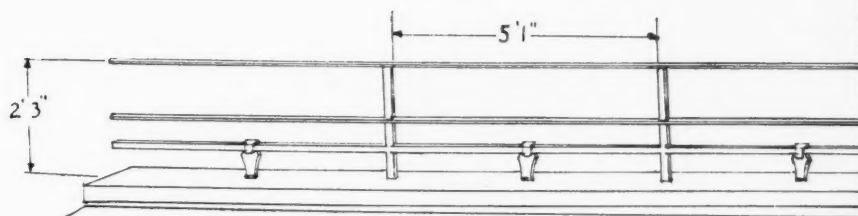


3

Entrance

SUBSIDIARY ENTRANCES

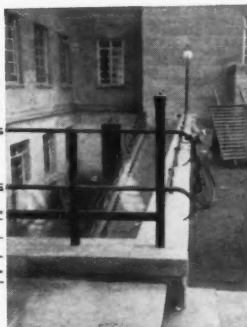
In addition to the main entrance, other departments have their own entrances. 6, the entrance to the Police and Fire Station on Bethel Street. 7, the south ramp leading down to the Juvenile Employment department with a detail of the wrought iron rails guarding the south bridge to the Public Assistance department. The lamp at bottom right, 8, designed, like all the light fittings, by the architects, is one of the two lighting the ramps. 5, shows the block containing the Council Chamber above the Public Assistance department. The south ramp is to the right and the [north to] the left of this block.



5



6



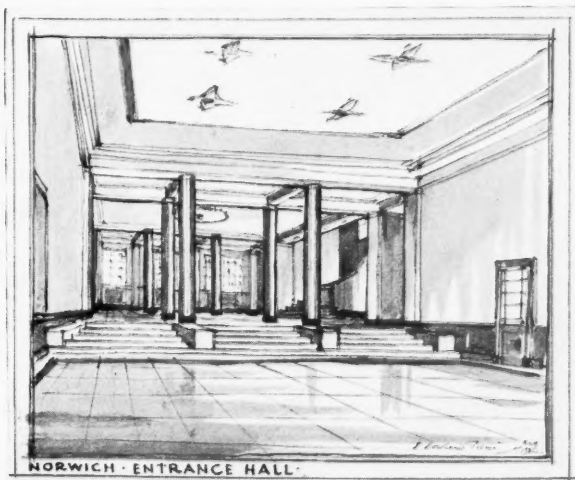
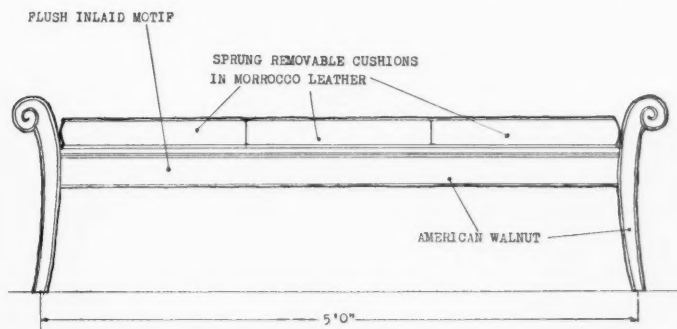
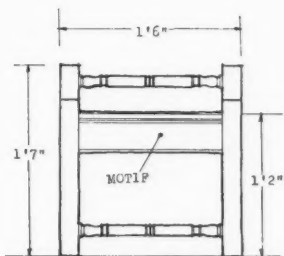
7



8

The Entrance Hall

It is interesting to compare the architects' conception of an idea with its translation into solid form. On the right is shown the treatment of the main staircase as originally conceived in the rough by Messrs. James & Pierce, 13, and below, its final form, 14. The staircase handrail was not yet in position when this photograph was taken. 11 and 12, compare the same two aspects of the Main Entrance Hall on the ground floor. See also Plate vii. 12, also shows one of a series of waiting benches designed for distribution throughout the building, and shown in detail in the drawing on this page.



11

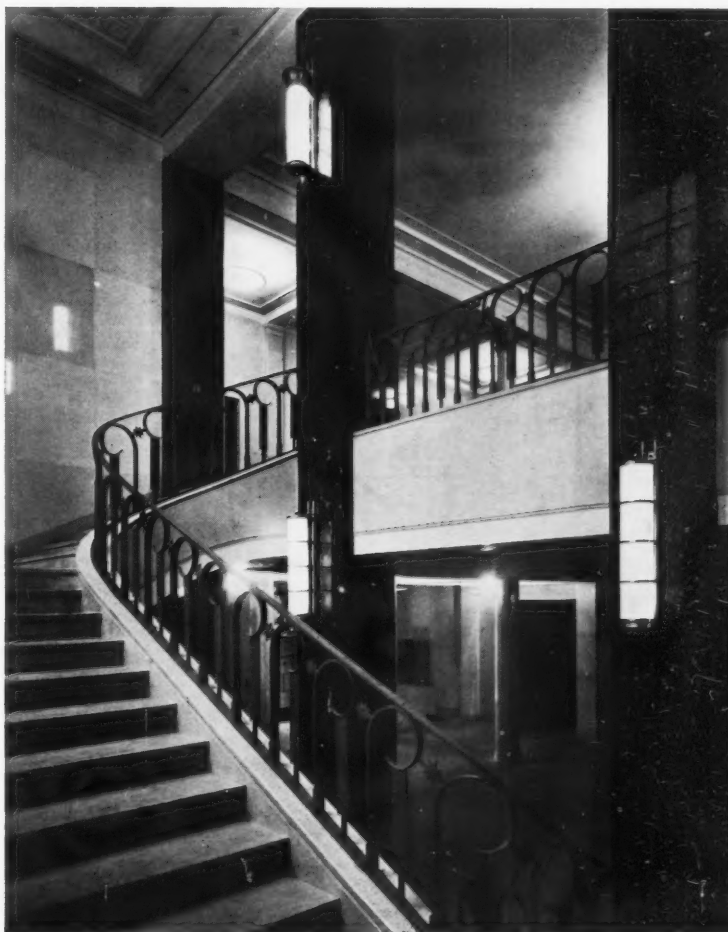


12

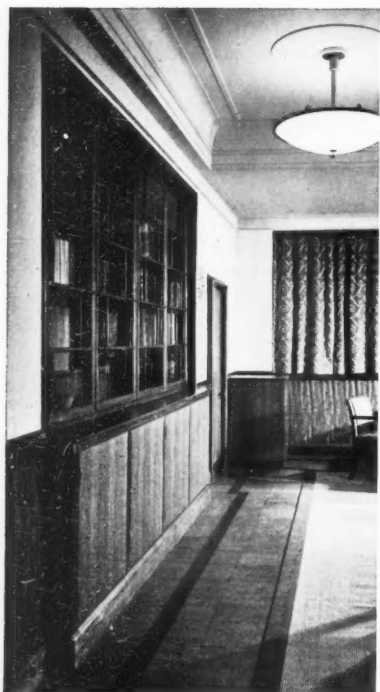
213



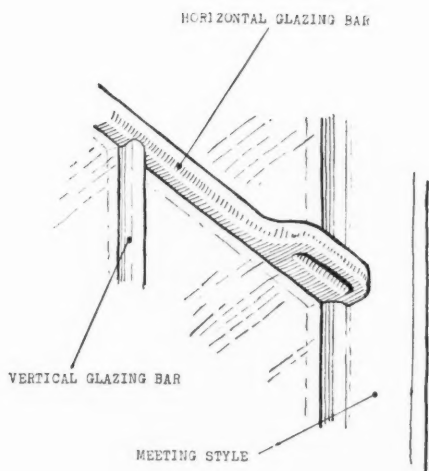
13



14



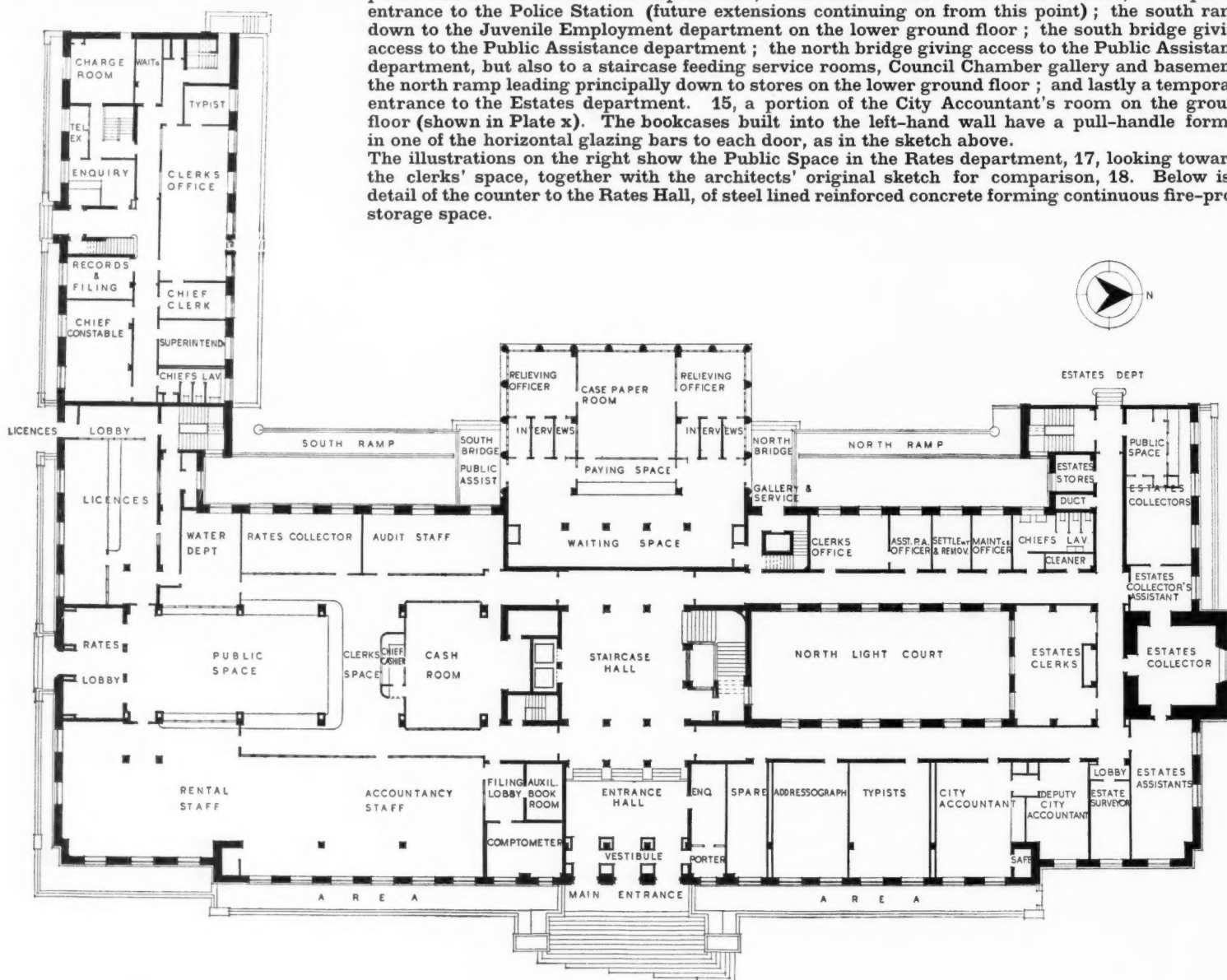
15



G r o u n d F l o o r

There are ten entrances to the City Hall on the ground floor, and these, travelling round the building in a clockwise direction, are the main entrance leading to the centre of circulation (see the diagrammatic functional plans on page 208); the public entrance to the Rates department; the public entrance to the Licences department; the main entrance to the Police Station; a temporary entrance to the Police Station (future extensions continuing on from this point); the south ramp down to the Juvenile Employment department on the lower ground floor; the south bridge giving access to the Public Assistance department; the north bridge giving access to the Public Assistance department, but also to a staircase feeding service rooms, Council Chamber gallery and basement; the north ramp leading principally down to stores on the lower ground floor; and lastly a temporary entrance to the Estates department. 15, a portion of the City Accountant's room on the ground floor (shown in Plate x). The bookcases built into the left-hand wall have a pull-handle formed in one of the horizontal glazing bars to each door, as in the sketch above.

The illustrations on the right show the Public Space in the Rates department, 17, looking towards the clerks' space, together with the architects' original sketch for comparison, 18. Below is a detail of the counter to the Rates Hall, of steel lined reinforced concrete forming continuous fire-proof storage space.



FIRST FLOOR STAIRCASE HALL

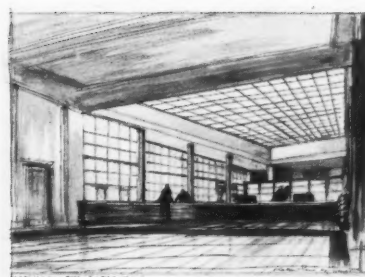
16, the staircase hall on the first floor. The ceremonial staircase leading from the ground floor entrance hall is immediately to the right facing the maroon cellulosed doors to the lifts seen on the left. Behind this curves the staircase leading up to the second floor. The main entrance doors to the Council Chamber can also be seen on the right. Materials generally in this hall are the same as those in the hall on the ground floor.



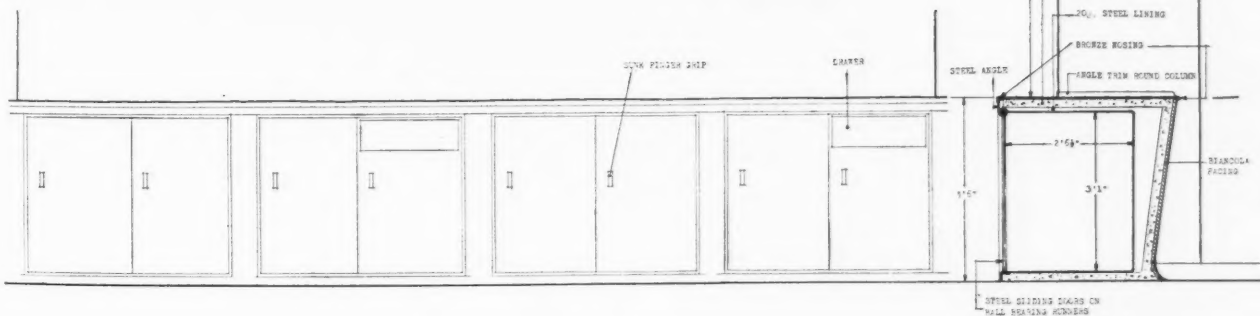
16

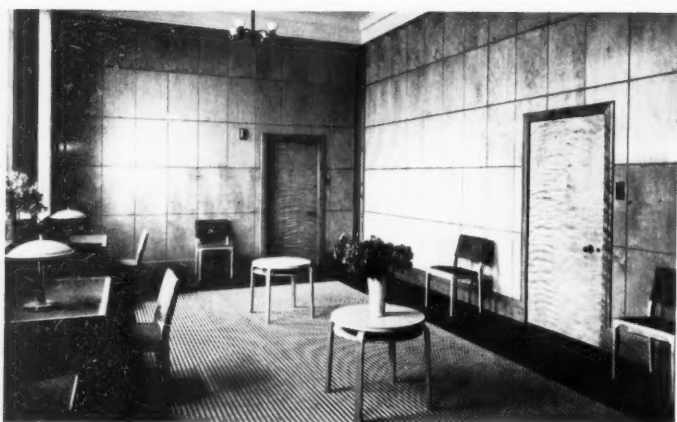


17



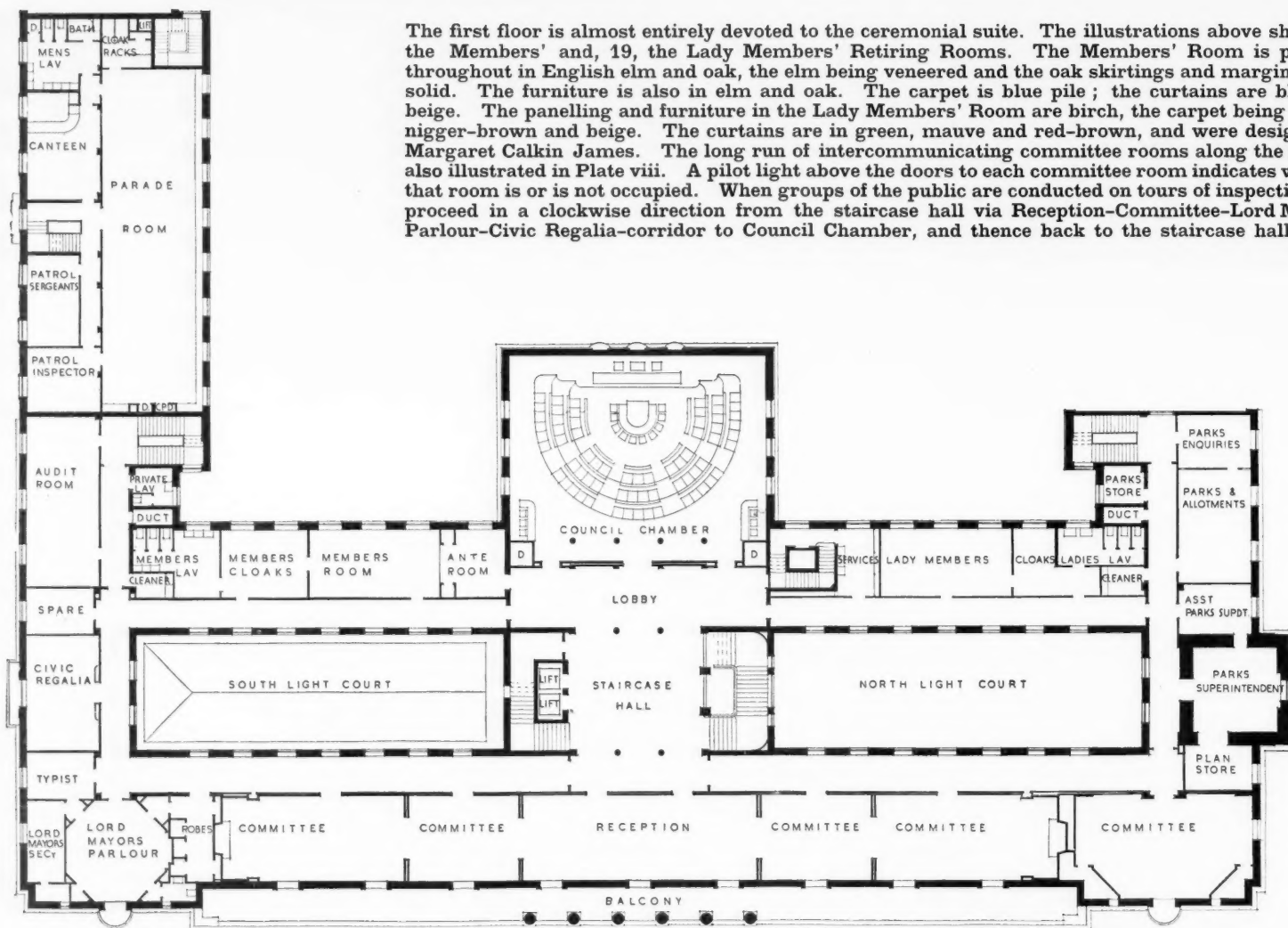
18





First Floor

The first floor is almost entirely devoted to the ceremonial suite. The illustrations above show, 20, the Members' and, 19, the Lady Members' Retiring Rooms. The Members' Room is panelled throughout in English elm and oak, the elm being veneered and the oak skirtings and margins being solid. The furniture is also in elm and oak. The carpet is blue pile; the curtains are blue and beige. The panelling and furniture in the Lady Members' Room are birch, the carpet being striped nigger-brown and beige. The curtains are in green, mauve and red-brown, and were designed by Margaret Calkin James. The long run of intercommunicating committee rooms along the front is also illustrated in Plate viii. A pilot light above the doors to each committee room indicates whether that room is or is not occupied. When groups of the public are conducted on tours of inspection they proceed in a clockwise direction from the staircase hall via Reception-Committee-Lord Mayor's Parlour-Civic Regalia-corridor to Council Chamber, and thence back to the staircase hall again.





The Council suite occupies nearly all the front portion of the first floor. Of this the central part is taken up by five intercommunicating committee and reception rooms. The walls are panelled in fiddle ash with teak inlay. Door and window surrounds are of teak. The tables are designed in sections for assembly as required.

PLATE viii

November 1938

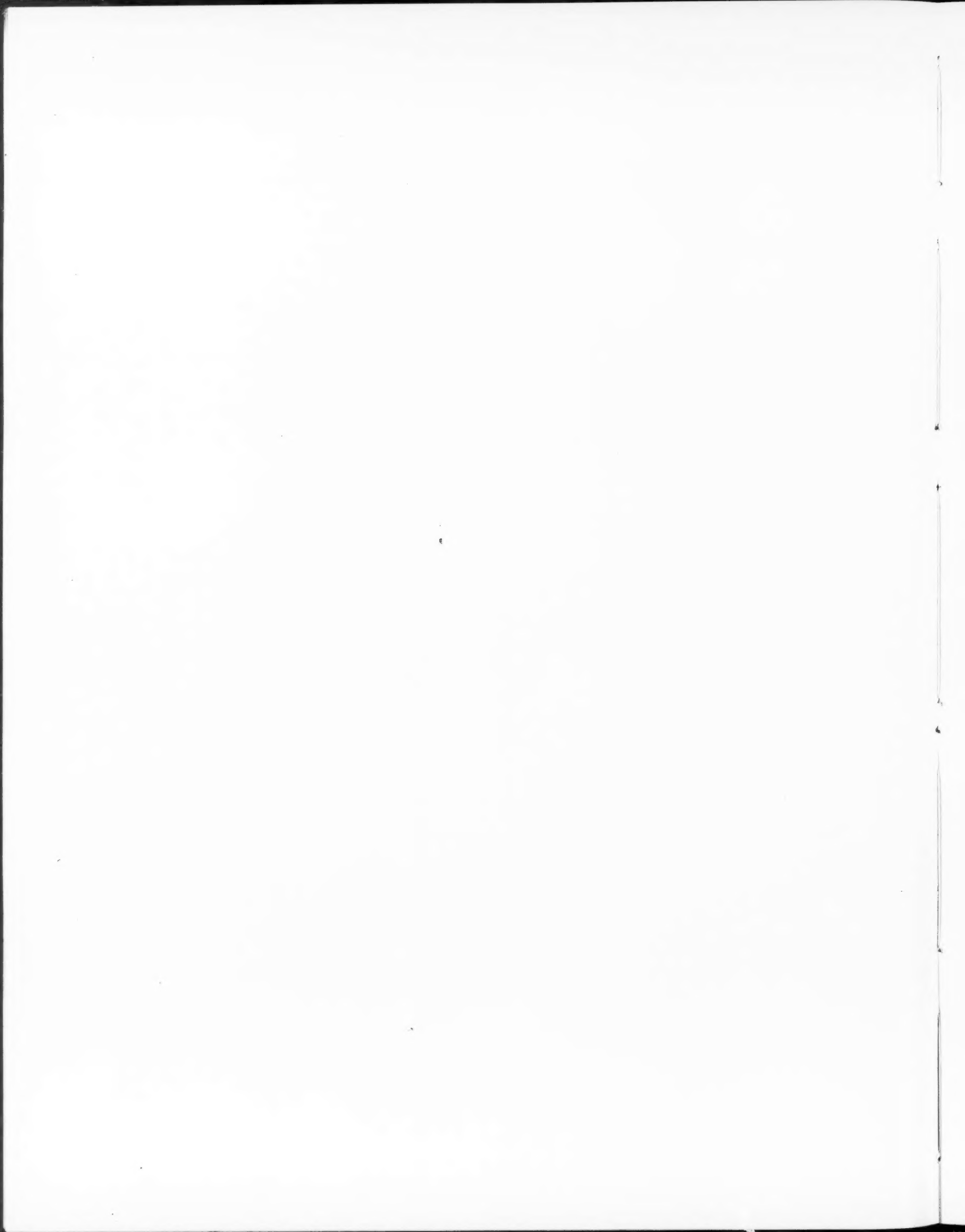


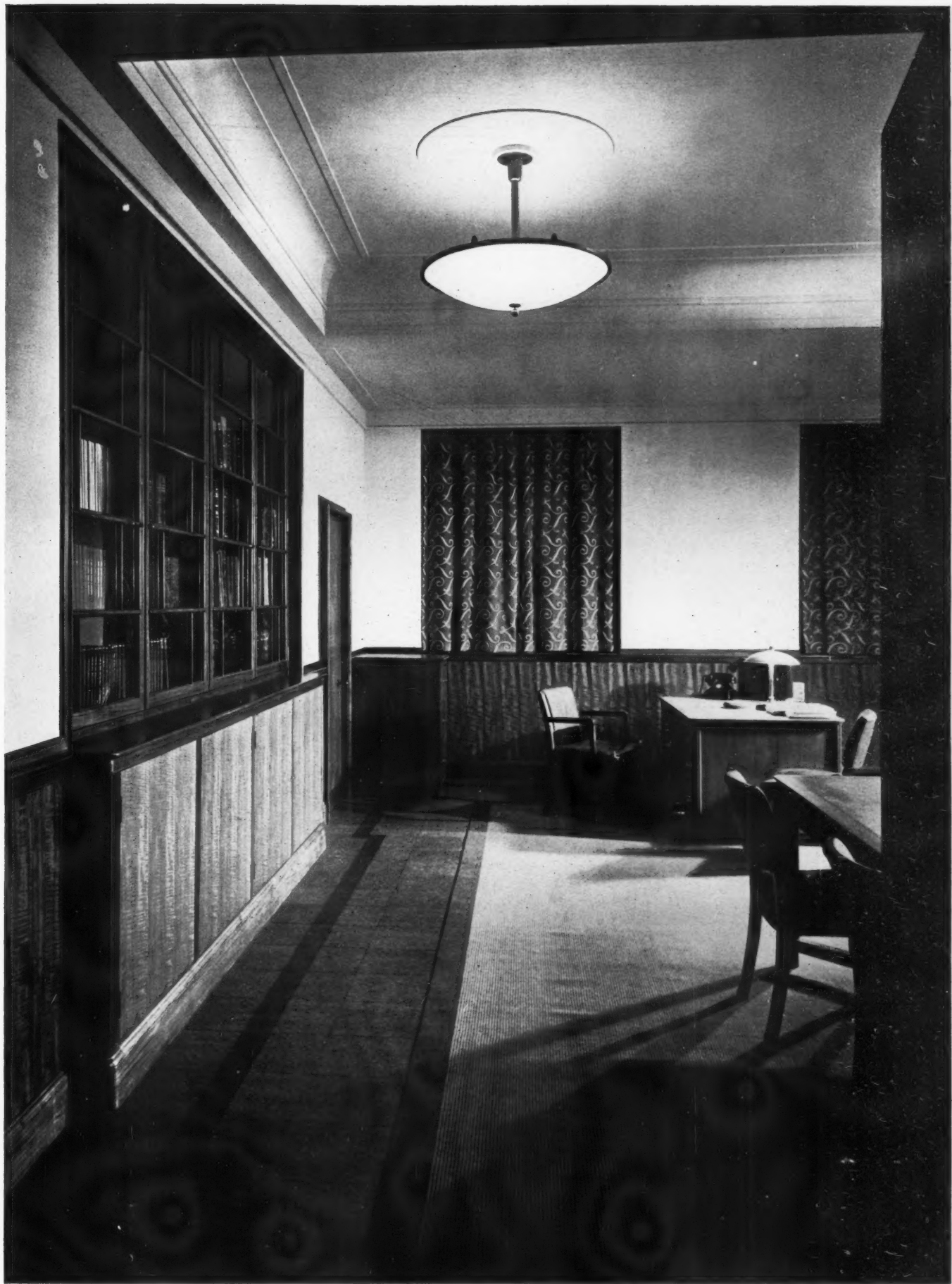
The council chamber forms the climax to the Mayoral section and rises through two floors of the main building. It is entered from the first floor hall immediately opposite the canopied dais beneath which is the Mayor's throne, the gallery entrance being on the second floor. The ceiling laylight is artificially lit from above at night, this being supplemented by four *torchères*.

PLATE ix

November 1938







On the entrance floor is the City Accountant's room. The woodwork generally is teak. The curtains have been designed on a motif indicating finance.

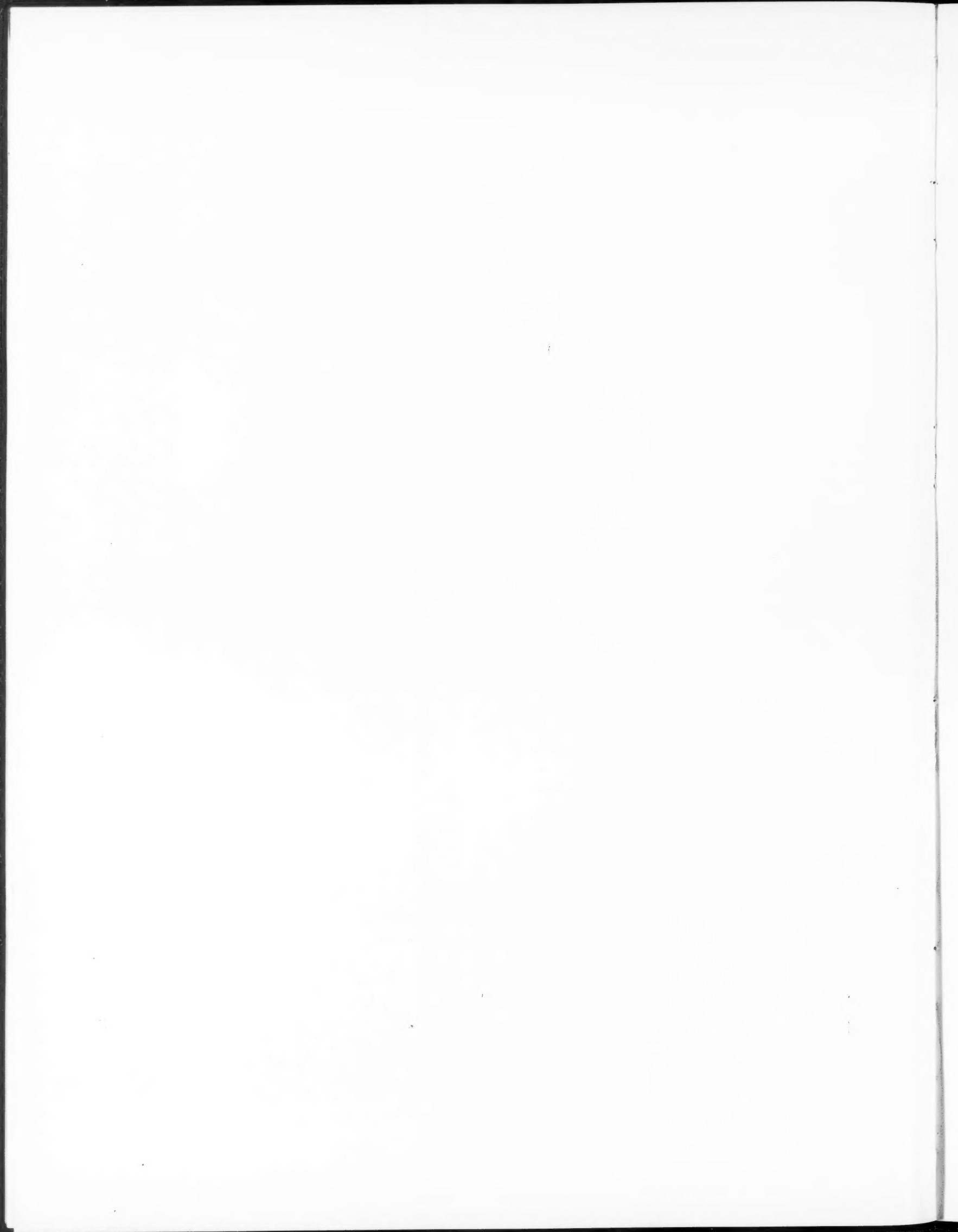
PLATE x

November 1938





From the third floor a view of the tower is obtained through the wrought iron grilles to the terrace outside the police flats. The covered belfry which rises from the observation platform at the top of the tower is sheathed in copper.





LEFT HAND DOOR OPEN
AND FOLDED BACK
FLAT TO WALL

LEFT HAND SLIDING
GRILLE PULLED OUT.

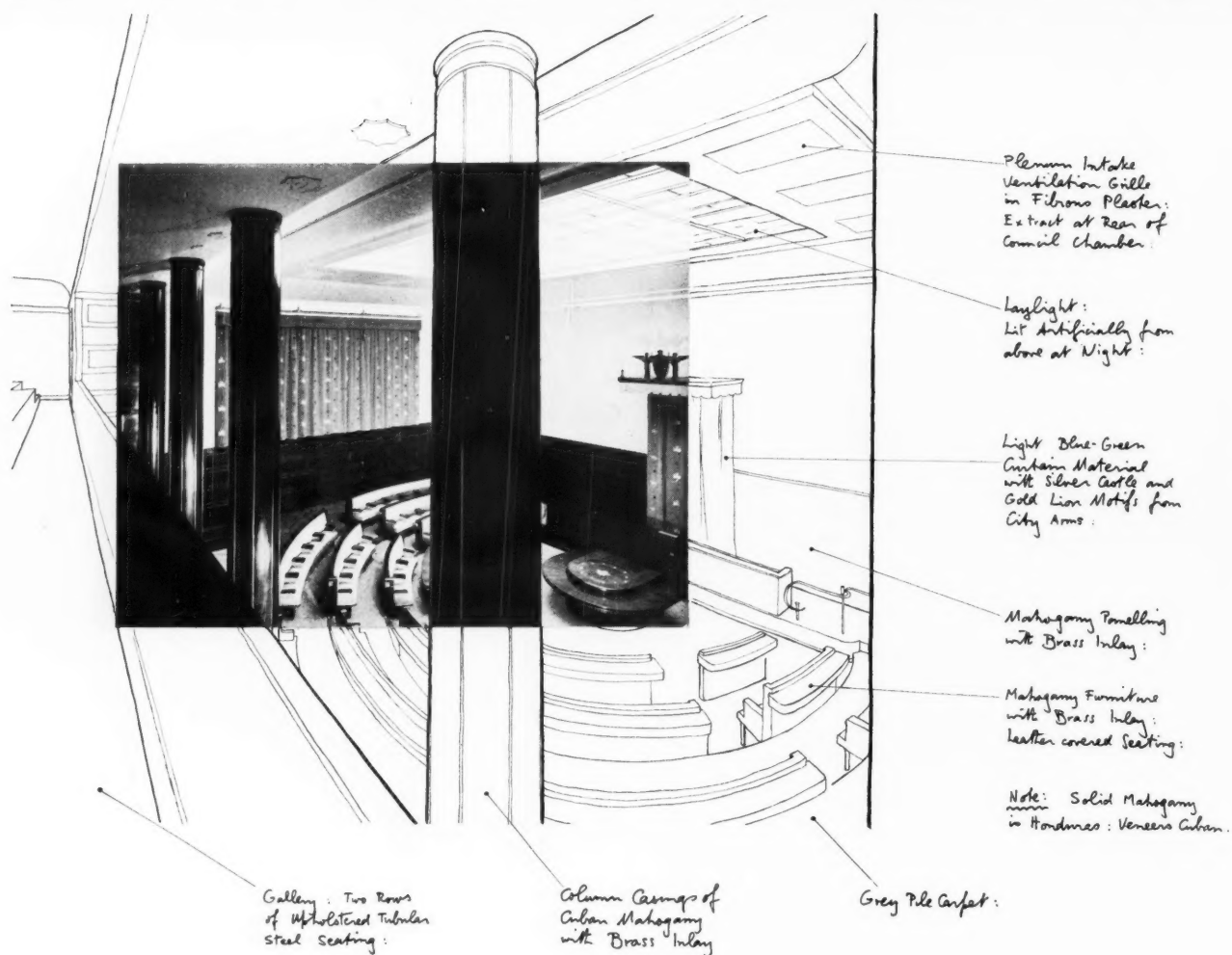
RIGHT HAND SLIDING
GRILLE HOUSED IN
CAVITY

RIGHT HAND DOOR IN
CLOSED POSITION

First Floor

The Civic Regalia of Norwich is one of the most valuable in the country and is housed in a room on the south side of the first floor near the Lord Mayor's Parlour. The illustration above shows the double doors to the Regalia room. These have been designed to fold back flat to the wall as panels at night, when the double grille is pulled out and locked across the opening, the corridor outside being patrolled by a police constable. Mirrors are arranged in the two far corners of the room so that every part is instantly visible to the patrol. The grille is in silvered steel, the doors and surround being walnut. The Mayor's octagonal Parlour, 21, is panelled in sycamore with French walnut trim, the door to the corridor being English walnut. The carpet and morocco upholstery to the walnut furniture are green.



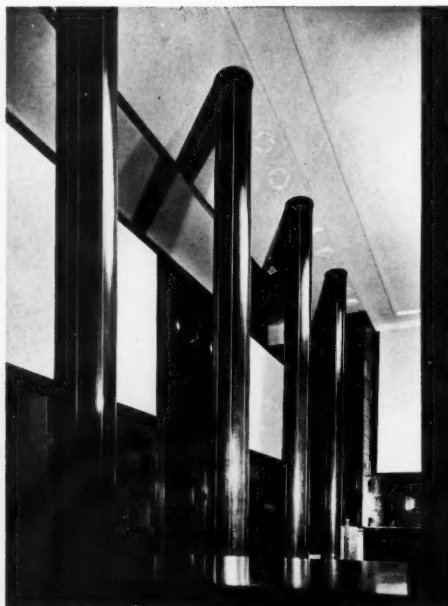


The Council Chamber

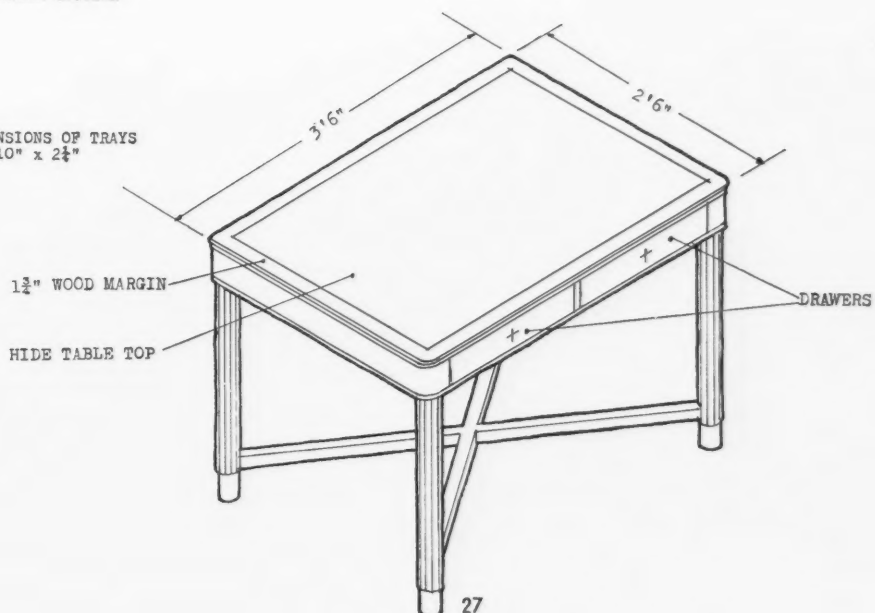
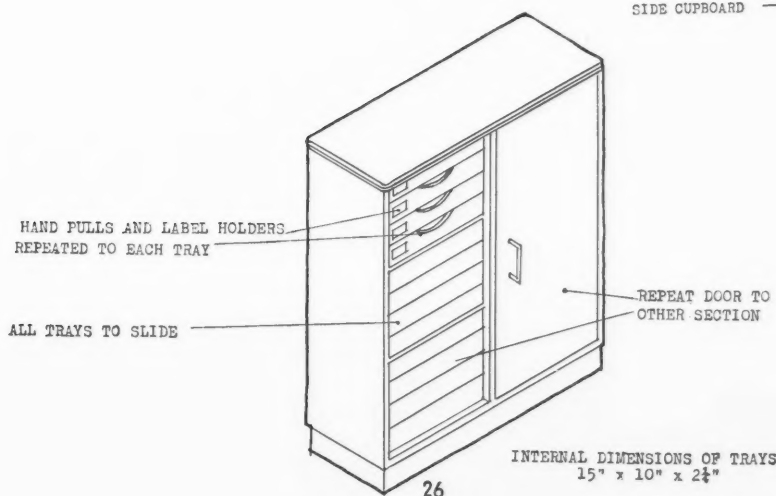
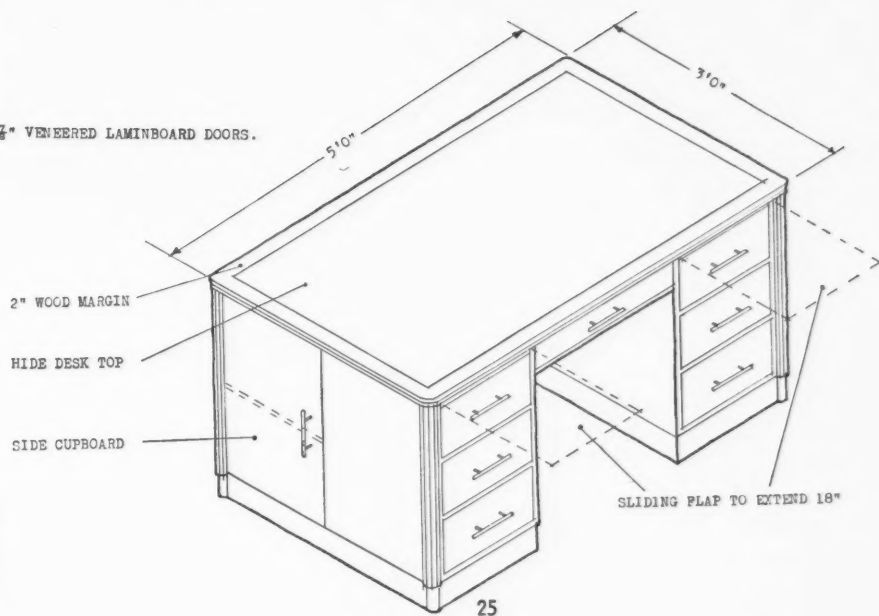
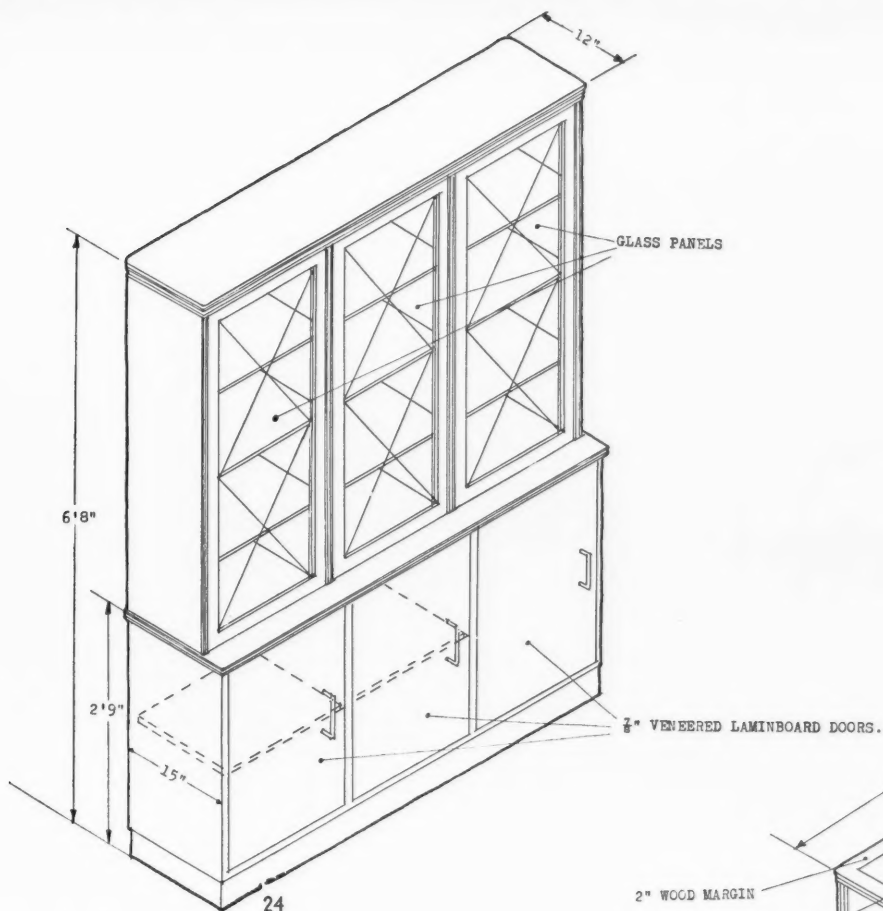
Materials used in the Council Chamber, the climax of the ceremonial suite, are indicated in the gallery-level view above, while in 22, taken at floor level, the furniture itself can be studied in closer detail. This illustration also shows two of the four *torchères* which augment the ceiling laylight, which is lit artificially from above at night. 23, the four free-standing mahogany-cased stanchions and the gallery above the entrance lobby. See also Plate ix.



22



23



Standard Furniture

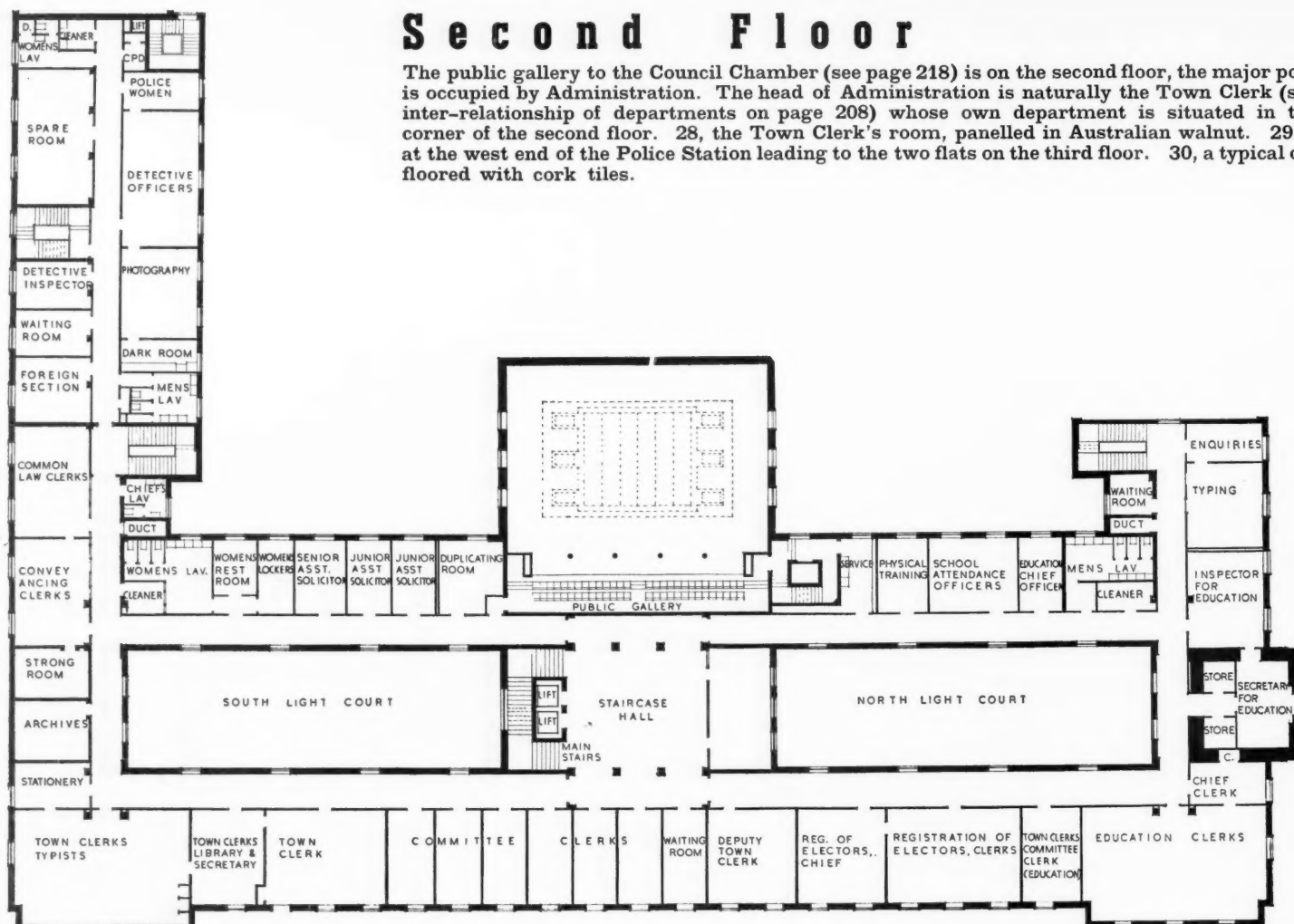
Furniture throughout the building has been designed by the architects and standardized wherever possible. The illustrations on this page show glass-fronted bookshelves with cupboards under for a chief official's room, 24; an office filing cabinet, 26; and a desk and a table for a principal's room, 25 and 27. Office furniture generally is of oak, but in the principals' rooms furniture has been executed in woods to harmonize with each scheme.



28

Second Floor

The public gallery to the Council Chamber (see page 218) is on the second floor, the major portion of which is occupied by Administration. The head of Administration is naturally the Town Clerk (see diagram of inter-relationship of departments on page 208) whose own department is situated in the south-east corner of the second floor. 28, the Town Clerk's room, panelled in Australian walnut. 29, the staircase at the west end of the Police Station leading to the two flats on the third floor. 30, a typical office corridor, floored with cork tiles.





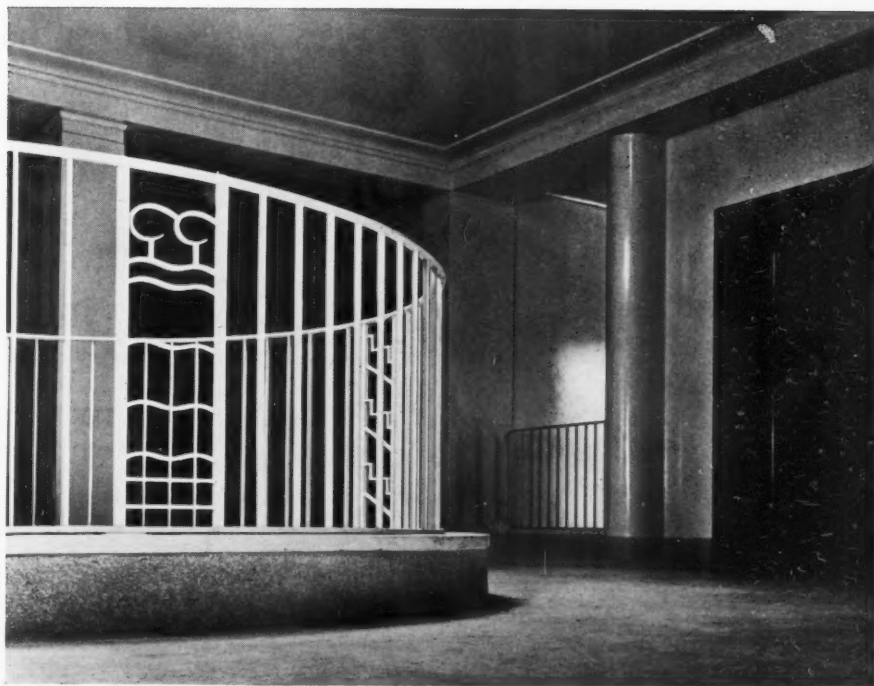
29



30

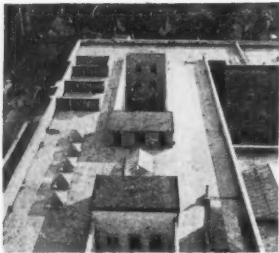
Third Floor

The plan of the third and top floor of the building is on the next page. The main stair continues up to this floor from the staircase hall, of which a circular well is open to the hall below. 31, a detail of the wrought iron balustrade surrounding this light-well.



31

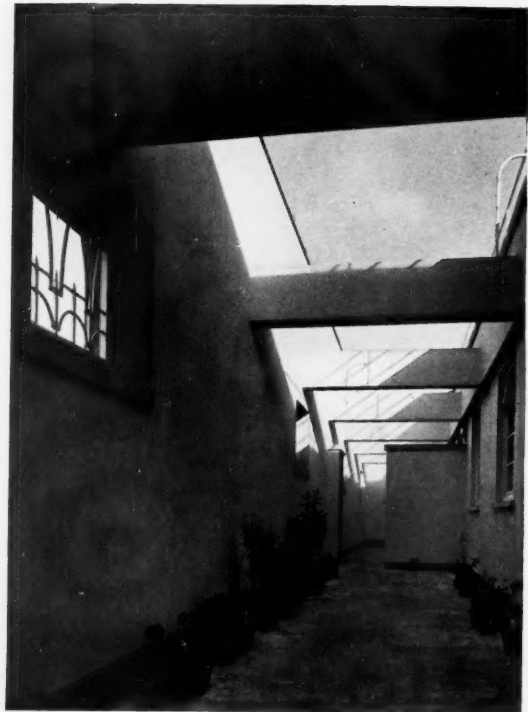
NORWICH CITY HALL



32



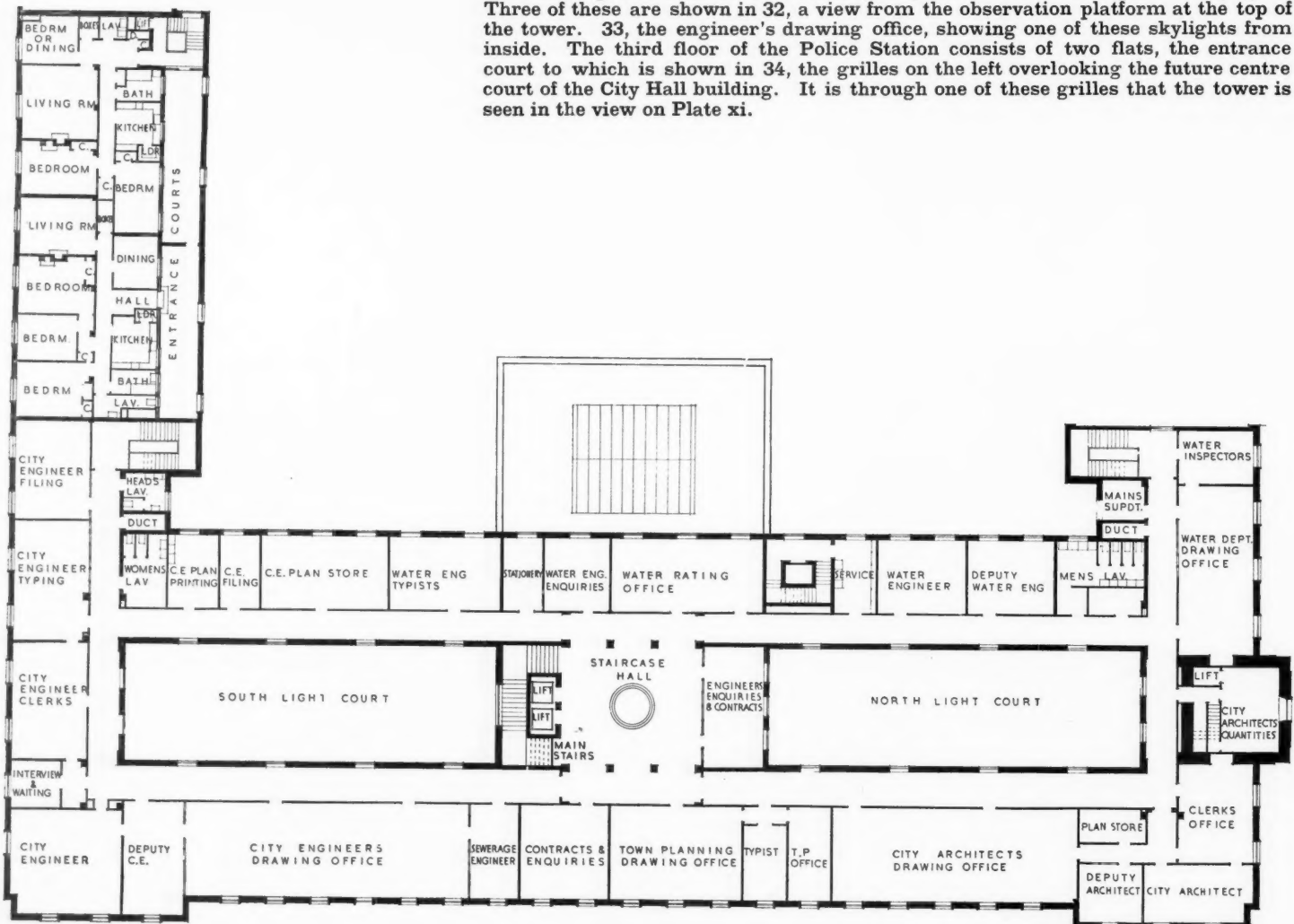
33



34

Third Floor

On the third floor have been placed the architect's and engineer's departments. The drawing offices obtain their north light by means of a series of parallel skylights. Three of these are shown in 32, a view from the observation platform at the top of the tower. 33, the engineer's drawing office, showing one of these skylights from inside. The third floor of the Police Station consists of two flats, the entrance court to which is shown in 34, the grilles on the left overlooking the future centre court of the City Hall building. It is through one of these grilles that the tower is seen in the view on Plate xi.



On the preceding pages on which Norwich City Hall has been illustrated in detail floor by floor, technical information has been given, in the form of sketches and notes, to the extent that was necessary to make the photographs intelligible. The fundamental technical aspects of a building are however of a kind that is not shown in photographs: the nature of the structure and the provision of the various services. These two aspects are summarized in the final section that follows.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTION

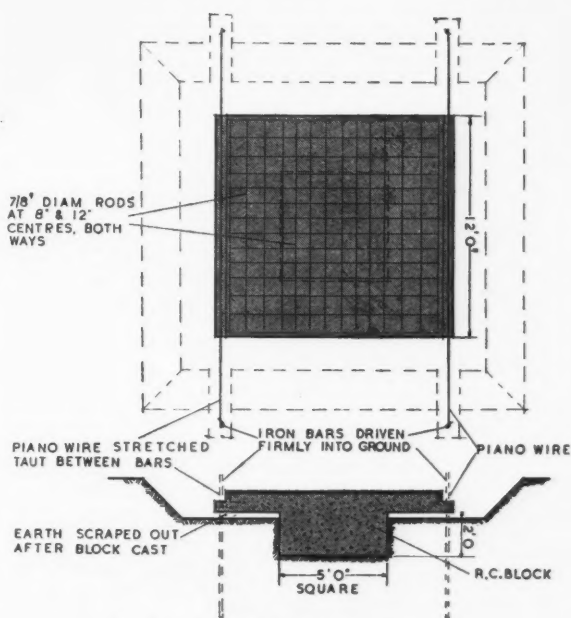
THE site of the new City Hall was originally occupied by the closely packed cluster of dwellings seen in the aerial photograph on page 204. Trial and bore holes were sunk before the demolition of this property and the ground appeared to be dry sand except at the north-east (basement) end where chalk was evident. In consequence of this it was decided to employ independent footings.

When the old buildings had been pulled down, however, it was found that lorries on the site tended to sink very badly in places. So soft were these spots that it was discovered a crowbar could be pushed its full length into the ground by hand. The chalk was higher in places than was at first thought. Apparently one of the bore holes had been sunk on the site of an old fault so that observations drawn from its sinking were by no means indicative of the surrounding ground. The chalk stratum underlay the sand, the chalk shelving away. In the light of this new information piling was considered, but it was eventually decided to raft the building and this was carried out. Tests were made on the site with a reinforced concrete test block. These are shown in the accompanying drawing. This was loaded to 2 tons per square foot, when the maximum sinking was 1/16 in. The foundations were therefore designed for a maximum pressure of 1½ tons per square foot.

The original design that won the 1932 competition was a steel-framed structure. In the present building, however, steelwork has been used for flooring, roofing and some stanchions only, the external walls to the main building and tower being solid brickwork. In the case of the tower the bricks were specified to crush at a

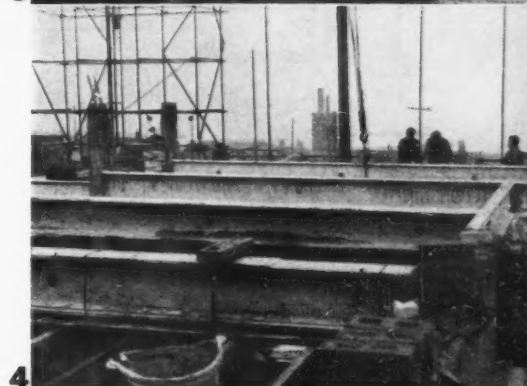
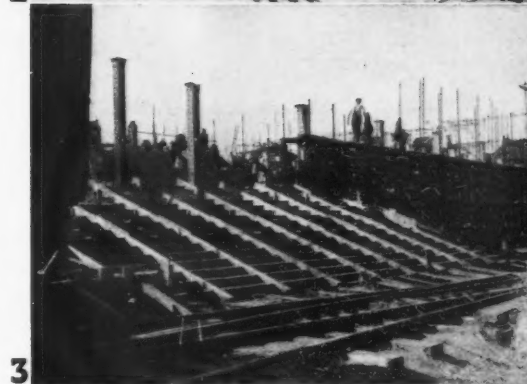
pressure of not less than 450 tons per square foot. The maximum pressure on the brickwork was 16½ tons per square foot.

Although this mixture of solid and frame construction makes the determination of stresses slightly more complicated in a building of this size,



Details of the reinforced concrete test block used for testing the bearing capacity of the ground.

The illustrations on the right were taken during construction and show: 1, excavations for foundations, looking north; 2, rolled steel joists to lower ground floor and reinforced concrete retaining walling to heating chamber; 3, main entrance steps; 4, rolled steel floor joists showing pre-drilled holes for services; 5, a view from the top of the Police Station block of the rear elevation before the tower had started to appear above the roof level.



NORWICH CITY HALL: CONSTRUCTION

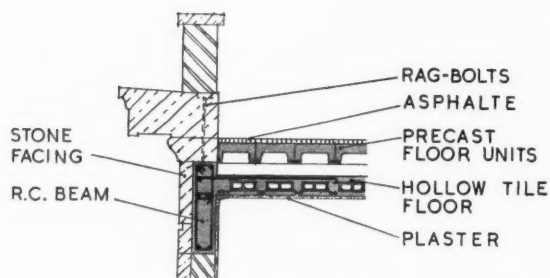
the method of construction has shown a saving of 1½ per cent. in this case.

Reinforced concrete retaining walls have been used in the basement and a reinforced concrete ring beam to the roof parapet to tie the building together, cross walls also being reinforced for this purpose. This ring beam is described in detail in the accompanying diagram, and can be seen in number 7 of the progress photographs.

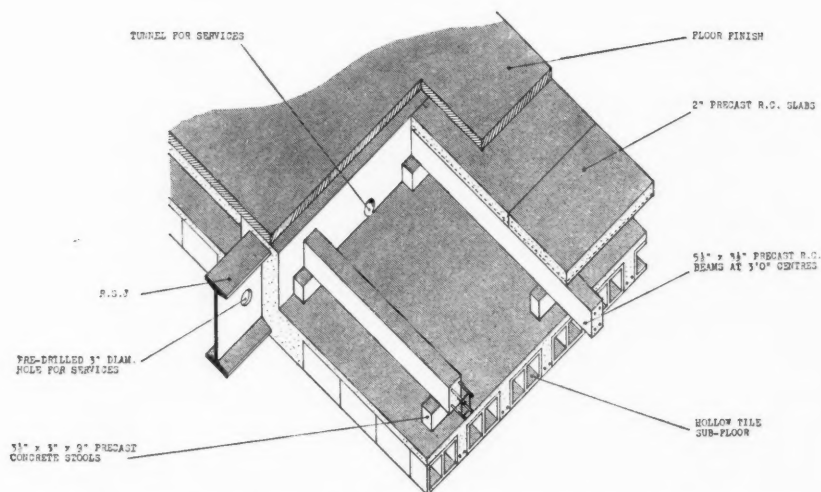
The construction of the floors and roof is also slightly unusual. The soffits of the hollow tile floors and the rolled steel joists between which they span are flush. On these sub-floors sleeper walls support the roofing or the several types of flooring. This method ensures that no beams break the line of ceilings, and has the additional functional advantage of providing about 1 ft. deep pipe and plenum ducts, the steel joists themselves being centrally drilled to take pipe runs where necessary, before assembly.



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION

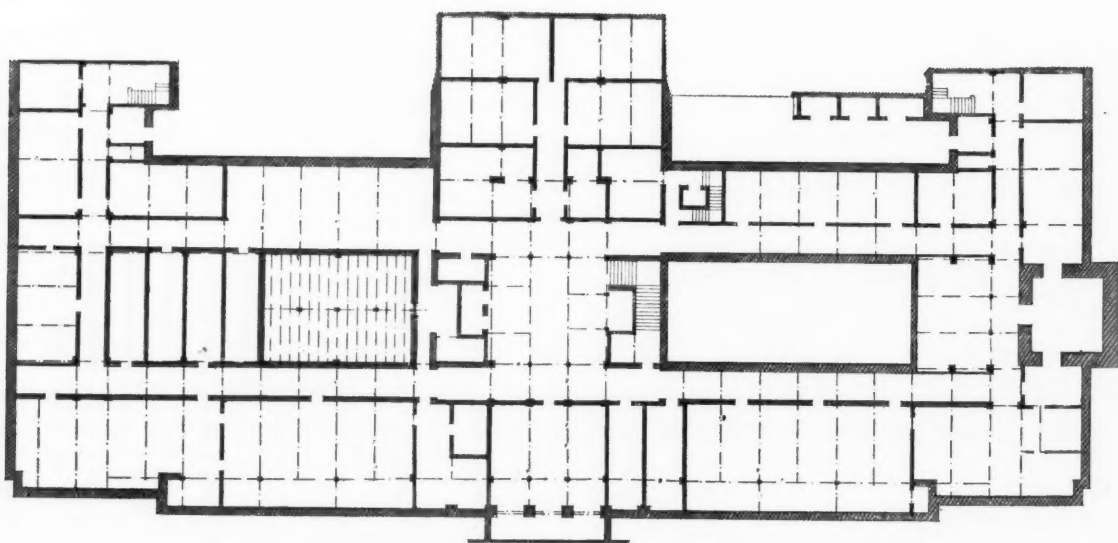


A DETAIL OF THE REINFORCED CONCRETE RING - BEAM SURROUNDING THE WHOLE BUILDING AND ACTING AS A TIE.



AN AXONOMETRIC DETAIL OF THE METHOD OF FLOOR CONSTRUCTION USED WHERE STONE OR TERRAZZO FINISHES OCCUR.

RIGHT, GROUND FLOOR PLAN SHOWING THE STEEL LAYOUT. THE BUILDING, APART FROM FLOORS, ROOF AND A FEW STANCHIONS, IS, HOWEVER, OF SOLID CONSTRUCTION.



Where the tower passes through the building it forms part of the various departments that are situated round it. The solid construction, however, causes the thickness of walls to a tower of this height to be distinctly greater than if frame construction had been employed. The photograph on the left shows one of the large reveals to doorways caused thereby.

SERVICES

It is of course by no means unusual nowadays for all the arteries of a building—the heating, hot water, cold water, electric and other services—to be hidden from sight. Concealment, however, often implies inaccessibility. It is therefore interesting when studying a building—especially a multi-purpose building—to observe the ways in which the architects have tackled this problem.

Ducts

Reference has already been made to the double floors in Norwich City Hall. These provide about 1 ft. deep horizontal ducts to every floor in the main portions of the building. 3 in. diameter holes (see figure 4) pre-drilled through the rolled steel joists allow the various services to pass in any direction. The only services which could never pass through holes in the joists, the plenum ventilation ducts, have been accommodated in the corridors (see sketch on page 226). The main trunks are suspended longitudinally beneath the crossing joists, branches running off laterally to the various departments as required. A slung ceiling conceals the trunks from view and also contains the heating panels.

Vertical ducts are well provided throughout the building as will be seen from the plans, but of particular note are the roomy ones placed immediately behind every w.c. range, as shown in the sketch on the next page. These take all the soil and other down pipes and are readily entered for inspection or repair. The drainage inspection chambers themselves are situated at the bottoms of these ducts, figure 11 showing such an assembly of pipe junctions in course of construction. In addition each of these ducts contains one continuous tank supplying each range of closets. This ensures a constant flow to every pan, complete absence of water waste

preventers with attendant piping in the closets, and renders possible the carrying out of adjustments to ball valves and similar repairs without putting any closets out of use.

The waste pipes from the hand basins run in concealed cavities to the large ducts (removable panels giving access), so that in consequence nothing is visible but the bottle-traps (see figure 12).

Heating

In the main building and in the Police Station, which are quite separate and self-contained, heating is of the ceiling panel type. For the main building there are two 750 K.W. electrode water heaters, with two cylinders of 15,000 gallons capacity each. The water is stored at a temperature of 250° F. and the flow from the vessel is mixed automatically with the return maintaining a flow temperature of 120° F. It is pumped through the system by duplicate pumps, either boiler or either pump being used as required. In the Police Station heating is also by ceiling panels, but here instead of electrode water heaters an immersion heater thermal storage cylinder has been used. It has a capacity of 7,000 gallons and duplicate pumps are again provided.

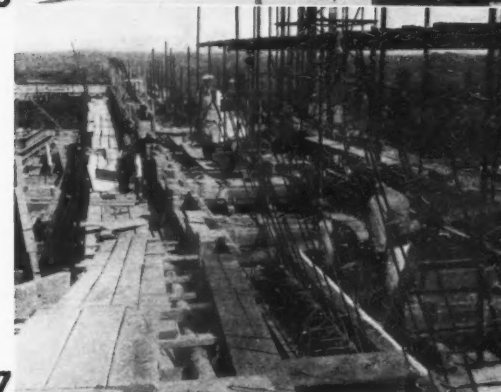
Hot Water Services

In both buildings the water is heated by electrical immersion heater storage

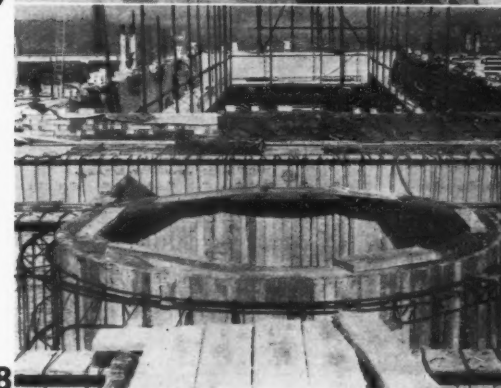
Further progress illustrations. Reading downwards: 6, the double roof showing pipe runs; 7, the reinforced concrete ring-beam at roof level; 8, the circular light-well to the central staircase hall; 9, the temporary market at the rear of the building during alterations to the Market Square; 10, the main front at about the same period.



6



7



8



9



10

NORWICH CITY HALL: CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICES

cylinders, and mixing valves automatically govern the out-flow temperature after regulating the supply of hot water from the vessel and cold from the main.

Automatic Ventilation

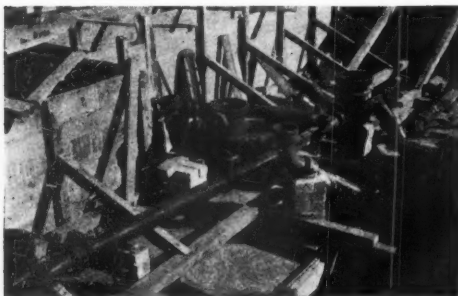
The plenum chamber in the main building is situated off the boiler chamber and supplies the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms. Magnetic valves are fitted to the panels in these rooms and control the supply of warm air thermostatically.

Cold Water Supply

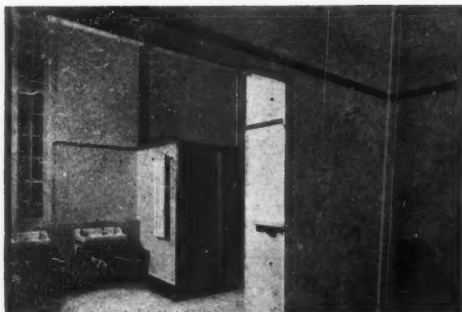
The cold water supply tanks are situated in the tower. On the fourth floor (roof level) there is one 800 gallon tank supplying the hot water system, while on the fifth floor there are two 800 gallon tanks supplying the heating system.

Electricity

The automatic electrode water-heaters charge the storage vessels in the heating chamber during the nine hours when electricity is available at a special "off-peak" rate. They are controlled by a circuit-breaker fixed in the adjacent sub-station, auxiliary controlling and recording apparatus being in a central position in the heating chamber itself.

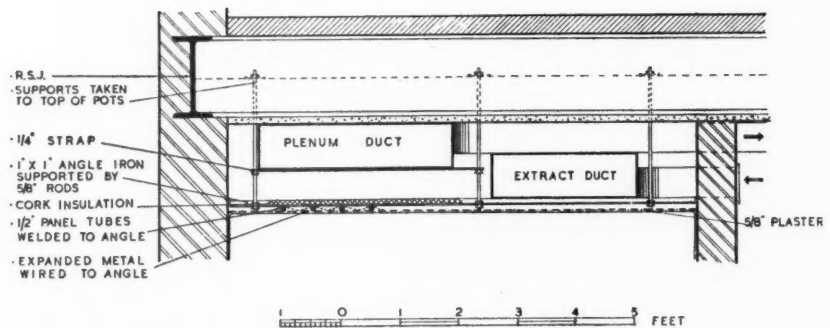


11

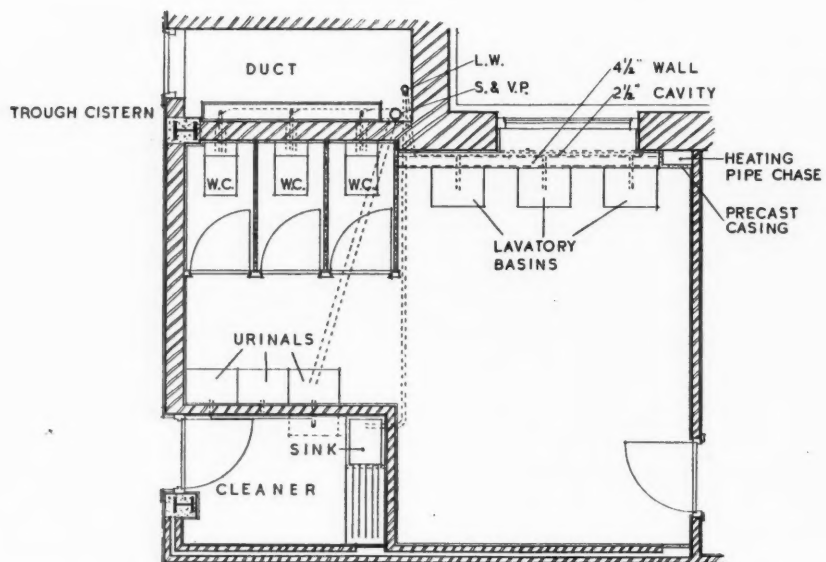
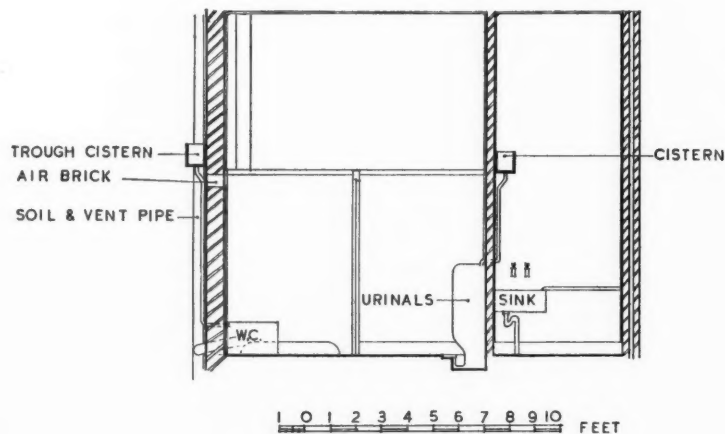


12

Details of typical lavatory and vertical duct behind every range of water closets ensuring complete absence of pipes: 11, pipe junctions at the bottom of one of these ducts during construction; 12, the finished interior of the male members' lavatory.



A SECTION THROUGH CORRIDOR SHOWING THE ARRANGEMENT OF PLENUM VENTILATION DUCTS, PANEL HEATING TUBES AND SLUNG CEILING.



PLAN AND SECTION OF MALE MEMBERS' LAVATORY, SHOWING DUCT SYSTEM.

ANTHOLOGY

Pugin writes from Rome

Rome, May 1st, 1847

I have now seen Rome and what Italian architecture can do, and I do not hesitate to say that it is an imperative duty on every Catholic to defend true and Christian architecture with his whole energy. The modern churches here are frightful; St. Peter's is far more ugly than I expected, and vilely constructed—a mass of imposition—bad taste of every kind seems to have run riot in this place; one good effect however results from these abortions: I feel doubly grateful for living in a country where the real glories of Catholic art are being revived and appreciated. In Rome it is hopeless, unless by miracle. I assure you I have felt quite depressed and miserable here; I shall be quite glad to get away. Were it not for the old Basilicas and the associations connected with early Christian antiquities, it would be unbearable—the Sistine Chapel is a melancholy room, the Last Judgement is a painfully muscular delineation of a glorious subject, the Scala Regia a humbug, the Vatican a hideous mass, and St. Peter's is the greatest failure of all. It is quite painful to walk about; Italian architecture is a mere system of veneering marble slabs; it is enough to make one frantic to think that these churches with their *plaster pilasters* and bad windows, have not only been the model for all larger churches erected during the last two centuries, but have been the means of spoiling half the fine old buildings through the efforts that have been made to assimilate them to this wretched model. They must have had some fine things at one time; there are several tombs and incised stones of the right character, and the subterranean church of St. Peter's contains several Bishops and Popes in fine chasubles, etc. I hope you will tell everybody that this is the place to confirm people in the true style, and I can now speak of all their matters from personal observation. I leave here on Tuesday 1st May; as soon as, D.V., I return to England I will come down to Ushaw.

My legs are still very weak, but otherwise I am stronger, and I shall feel better when I can get sight of a mullioned window again. The old Basilicas are very interesting, and if they had not given such a miserable modern dress to all the holy places, one might realize all the wonderful events connected with the early ages of Christianity within the city; but how is it possible to realize an idea of the residence of St. Peter, when we see a thing like a side chapel of Versailles? or the relics of a saint in a flower-pot? We must nail our colours to the cross, not to the mast. I never surrender; if my health will permit me, I shall publish this journey, and my impressions of Rome; it will have novelty, at any rate, to recommend it.

I remain yours respectfully,

A. WELBY PUGIN

Recollections of A. N. Welby Pugin.
Benjamin Ferrey, 1861.

MARGINALIA

Mies van der Röhe

The news comes from America that Herr Mies van der Röhe has been appointed Director of the Armour Institute of Technology's School of Architecture in Chicago. Mies van der Röhe

is one of that small but distinguished band of modern architects who worked in Behrens' office (Le Corbusier and Gropius were others). He subsequently exercised a great influence on modern continental architecture as director first of the

Deutsche Werkbund and afterwards of the Bauhaus at Dessau (where he followed Gropius). At the moment it seems likely that America will benefit as much from the current ideological heresy-hunting in Europe as Prussia itself once did from a

similar outburst in France that sent the ablest of the French Huguenots to seek shelter with Herr Hitler's less obsessed predecessor, the Great Frederick.

The Iron Road

The year 1938 sees the centenary of the London and Birmingham Railway, and the occasion has been suitably commemorated by an excellent exhibition arranged by the L.M.S. at Euston and the publication of an admirably produced souvenir book. Euston was the first, and remains the finest architecturally, of the great London termini, and it is gratifying to find that the L.M.S. are conscious of the worth of their heritage and have given it a fitting expression. The most admirable feature of this little book is the splendid series of illustrations arranged in pairs of "then and now," which include a contemporary engraving of Hardwick's noble Greek Doric arch alongside a photograph of the same structure as it is today. Comparing these two pictures one cannot help being a trifle saddened by the unworthy sheds and buildings which have been allowed, maybe inevitably, to encroach, and by their presence and scale detract from the staggering monumental effect of the arch itself. However, this invasion was perhaps unavoidable, but if and when the arch is re-erected in the new Euston, one hopes that the two flanking pavilions, if they are retained, may in future be kept free of advertisements.

The revenue from posters is obviously one that no railway can be expected to forgo, but it would surely be possible to exclude them from one or two places where they flourish at present, with small financial loss and immeasurable aesthetic gain. The two views of Denbigh Hall bridge, reproduced on page 228 from the little book already referred to, forcibly illustrate how much posters stuck in odd positions on buildings that were never designed for such embellishments can do to wreck any architectural quality the structure in question may possess. We cannot expect the Company to provide an elegant squadron of Hussars to pass constantly to and fro for our delight, but one feels that they might at least exclude that hirsute and ubiquitous seaman whose fea-

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS



DENBIGH HALL BRIDGE.



In connexion with the "Century of Progress" Exhibition which they recently staged at Euston, the L.M.S. published an informative and illustrated pamphlet on the Company's history and achievements. The illustrations included a series of comparative views of features of the London-Birmingham railway as they were when built and as they are today. Above are comparative views of Denbigh Hall bridge. See the note beginning on the preceding page.

tures loom so large in all our public places.

The text of the book, which is entitled "A Century of Progress," provides an admirable summary of the Company's history and includes many enlightening quotations from old guide books and the like, of which the following is particularly interesting as providing an excellent example of the exalted opinion that the early Victorians entertained of railways, and the complete lack of false modesty in regard to the importance and permanent value of the achievements of science and industry; a self-confidence that, under the influence of Ruskin and the aesthetes, was all too soon to dwindle to that shame-faced and half apologetic attitude that was responsible for so much muddled thinking and muddled planning in the second half of last century: "... a piece of workmanship of the most stupendous kind; which, when considered with respect to its scientific character, magnitude, utility, its harmony of arrangement and mechanical contrivance, eclipses all former works of art. Compared to it, how shabby a structure would be the celebrated Roman wall, or even the more extensive one of the Chinese; as for the Egyptian pyramids, they, so far from being fit to be mentioned in comparison with the railway, are merely uncouth monuments..." Let some of the popular archaeologists who are always so full of the wonders of ancient Egypt and the colossal achievements of Babylonia put that in their pipes and smoke it. Uncouth is the operative word.

WITHOUT COMMENT

"Don't bottle it up—that crisp Autumn longing to do something crazy to your house. All rules are off in decoration: your hand is free: so let yourself go. Have your fling... but don't lose your head about it. Don't go crazy over the big irrevocable things. Have fun with paint, with ribbons, with silly ornaments, and if you tire of them (which won't be half as soon as you think) you can cut them right out of your life. Try ideas like these..."

"In a country dining-room, hang swags of material over a row of old-fashioned clothes pegs. Concoct a trophy arrangement, in the Louis XVI manner, of such unexpected objects as children's miniature garden tools. Paint the floor of a hall or garden room red, in marbled effect, and paint a white balustrade on a grey wall to bring outdoors indoors.

"Why have all the walls in one room alike? Next to a pink wall, have a pin-striped papered wall, on which you paste a few personal snapshots. Paint a floor green and line it off like seamed carpet. Pin back a white plaster curtain with bright feathers. Consider that new Italian blue, risorgimento, for your walls.

"Cover each dining-room chair in a different colour, harlequin fashion. Use pleated white curtains with different coloured plaster valances. Paint gay rugs on the floor.

"Top off a striped wall-paper with a frieze of scalloped lace. Paint your walls with your favourite flowers, singly or in bunches, as the fancy takes you. Or if you have a wall which stares too blankly at you, make a mock window in it by painting on Venetian blinds surrounded by real curtains and draperies. (Or you can use a Venetian blind chintz.)

"Be frankly chi-chi and dot your house with big butterflies. Put them under a glass dining-table top, one for each place; perch dragon-flies on lampshades. Paint your kitchen sea-green and clamp plaster fish plaques at eye level along the walls. Give your bedroom a fairy cave look with the delicious new beaded net called 'Eyky-net.'"

From VOGUE.

A Rose by any other Name

The recent policy of the L.C.C. with regard to the street-names of London while doubtless dictated by necessity and aiming at nothing but increased convenience for the public at large and the post office in particular does, nevertheless, give rise to certain apprehensions. Hitherto the street-names of London have enjoyed a splendid inviolable sanctity that renders the capital for once a pleasing contrast to the majority of continental towns: changes have occurred from time to time, but compared with the rapidity with which the *Avenues Gambetta* change to *Rues Vingt-Sept Septembre* and end up as *Quais Roi Nicolas de Monténégre*, they appear as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. No one will doubt that the enlightened authorities have the best interest of the community at heart and few will weep to see a thinning out in the number of *Acacia Groves* and *Disraeli Rds.*, but one thing leads to another and once a precedent has been created who knows what havoc some more ideologically minded Council of the future may not cause. The awful fate of Vienna should be a warning, where in less than twenty years a square by the *Votiv Kirche* has been in turn the *Franz-Josef Platz*, the *Freiheits Platz*, the *Dollfuss Platz* and the *Adolf Hitler Platz*. Moreover certain of the changes are to be regretted for themselves; why for instance should the *Ratcliffe Highway*, a name sanctified by memories of years of razor fights, opium smoking, white-slaving, brothel-

keeping and highly coloured low-life generally be shortened to the non-committal *Highway*? And in addition those responsible seem to have an unnatural and regrettable fondness for the term "Way," so redolent of arts-and-crafts and garden cities, which may possibly be unobjectionable when applied to a rough track across the moors but is surely quite inapplicable to a wide tarmac thoroughfare in the heart of a large city? In this connexion all praise is due to London Transport who stoutly refuse to conform to the new nomenclature and obstinately retain the name *Queen's Road* for their station situated in what is now *Queen's Way*.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

Sir,

The paradoxical situation exists in this country that any improvement in the standard of design attained by large production manufacturers of modern furniture is directly opposed to the interests of those designers who, by reason of their superior talent and ability, are best fitted to foster and maintain such improvement.

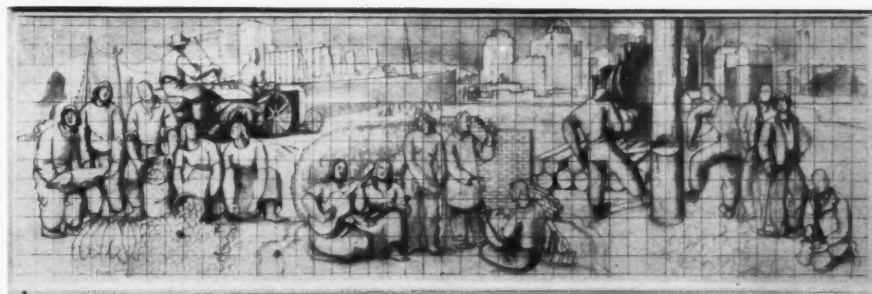
This position is brought about by the fact that the most talented designers, in the natural desire to utilize to the full their own designing abilities, aim to set up individually as interior decorators in their own name. Such small units in the commercial world are not in a position either to co-operate

with large production manufacturers, or even to display or trade to any appreciable extent in ready-made goods, however well these may be designed. They are compelled by circumstances to restrict their trading to the sale of individually designed schemes of decoration specially produced for each client who consults them.

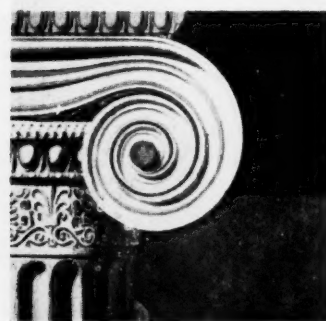
The abilities of these designers would be even more valuable if they could be applied to the design of articles for mass production, and to the selection and assembly of such articles into balanced and harmonious schemes of decoration. The fact that their talents cannot in existing circumstances be so applied is not in the best interests of the public, of the manufacturers, or of the designers themselves.

A proposal has therefore been put forward and is at present under consideration by a number of leading interior decorators, that an "Association" should be formed by means of a merger of a number of designers into one co-operative organization.

This "Association" would act as a trading company, and would establish and maintain, in a London house selected for the purpose, a permanent and representative display of furniture and interior decoration, of a high standard of design, on the lines of the Building Centre. This display would include specially designed schemes created by the members of the Association, in addition to manufacturers' standard products selected by the participating designers, or designed by them in collaboration with the manufacturers.



At the Glasgow Exhibition Mr. Frank Dobson, the sculptor, turned to decoration on a flat surface for the large mural paintings which he designed for the interior of the Canadian Pavilion. His drawings for this mural are now on exhibition at the Nicholson Gallery, St. James's Place. Above is a sketch of the whole decoration, which measured 44 feet by 13 feet.



Above is a photograph of the specimen of the fruit of *Medicago Orbicularis* picked on the Acropolis at Athens and referred to in Mr. E. C. Leach's letter on this page. On the right, for

comparison, is the volute of the Ionic capital from the Erechtheion Temple on the Acropolis. The actual size of the specimen photographed is approximately $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch.

The primary object of the Association would be to set itself in a position to supply to the discerning public well designed modern interior decoration at as wide a variety of price as possible, either in the form of special decorative schemes designed by its members, or of the selection and assembly of ready-made articles under the advice of its members.

It is not intended that the participating designers should submerge their identity into that of the Association, but that they should continue to carry out work in their own names as members of the co-operative body.

The Executive Members of the Association would necessarily be restricted to a small number of able and experienced

designer/traders, and would be responsible for administration. Non-Executive Members would not necessarily be restricted in number, and would be designers of a suitable standard of talent and ability, not fully employed within the framework of the Association, but contributing to the design of its products and entitled to pass their work through its organization.

The scheme has been thought out in great detail, and steps are being taken at present to select the principal participants. It is hoped that it will very shortly be possible to proceed with flotation of the necessary Company. I would be most interested to receive comments or criticisms from any decorators or others, and to supply them if they wish with further

information of what has already been done.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN H. BUTLER.

Chelsea, S.W.3.

The Editor,

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.

Sir,

In our student days the natural objects from which the Ionic volute was developed are lightly hinted at—the ram's horn or various shells.

I do not remember having seen any reference to the fruit of *Medicago Orbicularis*, common in S. Europe.

The enclosed specimen was picked on the Acropolis in July, where it was growing in profusion.

The volute, as you see, is more perfect and more closely approximate to the Ionic capital than any of the accepted sources of inspiration.

Yours, etc.,

E. C. LEACH,

Cunard Building, Liverpool.

P.S.—“Fruit of *Medicago Orbicularis*, a member of the family Leguminosæa (pea, clover, vetch tribe).”

“The plant is widely distributed in Southern Europe.”—*Report of Liverpool City Botanist.*

Acknowledgement

The photograph of Mr. Alfred Hardiman, the sculptor, on page 206 is reproduced by courtesy of Messrs. Elliot & Fry.

